

STORIES OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE



AGNES MAULE MACHAR

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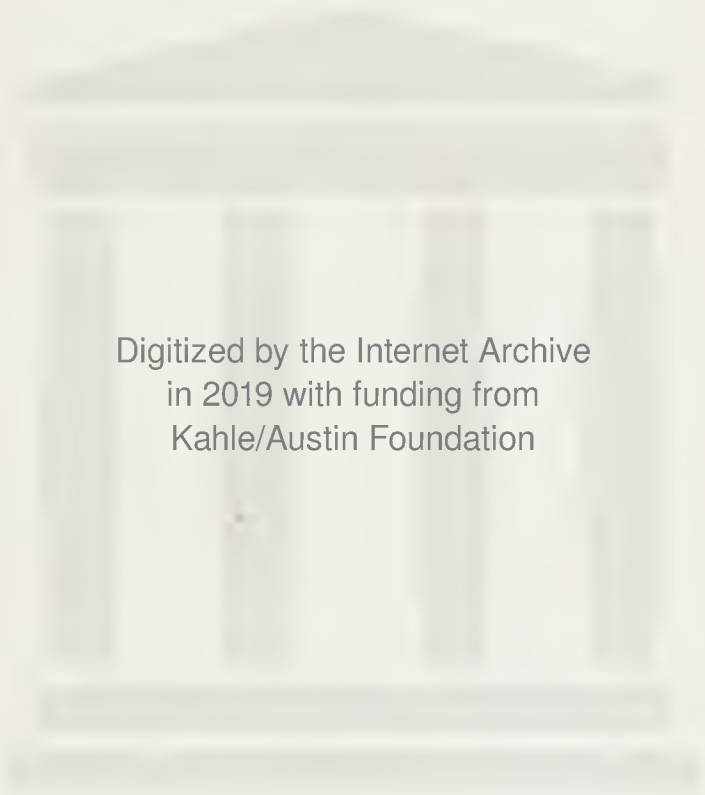


STORIES OF
THE BRITISH EMPIRE

FIRST SERIES
EARLY ENGLAND

ALSO BY THE SAME AUTHOR

THE STORY OF OLD KINGSTON
LAYS OF THE TRUE NORTH
STORIES OF NEW FRANCE
MARJORIE'S CANADIAN WINTER
ROLAND GRAEME, KNIGHT



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WESTMINSTER ABBEY, WEST FRONT.

Frontispiece

STORIES OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE

For Young Folks and Busy Folks

By

AGNES MAULE MACHAR

Author of "Stories of New France," "Lays of the True North," "The
Story of Old Kingston," "Marjorie's Canadian Winter,"
"Roland Graeme, Knight," etc., etc.

PREFACE

BY THE RIGHT REVEREND

J. E. C. WELLDON, D.D.

DEAN OF MANCHESTER

SERIES I and II

"Not once or twice in our fair island story
The path of duty was the way to glory."

TENNYSON'S *Ode on the Death of the
Duke of Wellington.*

SECOND EDITION

TORONTO: WILLIAM BRIGGS

1914

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PREFACE

THERE are various ways of writing history. Some histories are vivid, graphic, picturesque like Macaulay's or Froude's ; but they run the risk of sacrificing accuracy to effect. Others again like Hallam's or Stubbs's are scientific ; but they are apt to be dull, and it is only the comparatively few exact students of the past who feel bound to read them. But where history is treated biographically, as Miss Machar treats it in her *Stories of the British Empire*, it never loses its interest ; and the young folks and the busy folks for whom her book is designed, if they take it up, will not, I think, lay it down until they have finished it. How the great figures of English History stand out as it were on her canvas, Boadicea, Alfred the Great, Edward the Confessor, Harold and William the Conqueror, Henry I and Edward I, Mary Queen of Scots and Queen Elizabeth, Oliver Cromwell, Clive and Chatham, Nelson and Wellington and finally Queen Victoria ! These great figures are associated with great events, and Miss Machar has frequently illuminated the events by some striking passages of English poetry.

The *Stories of the British Empire* set out a subject which is of all subjects the most touching and the most stirring to British hearts, whether at home or in the Dominions beyond the seas. It is a happy circumstance that the lady who relates them should herself belong to the great Dominion of Canada. For no

region of the Empire is more loyal or more valuable to Great Britain than Canada.

There are in fact four main eras in the expansion of the British Empire. The first is the Elizabethan. It was then that the foundation stone of the Empire was laid by Sir Humphrey Gilbert in the colonization of Newfoundland, the most ancient British Colony, in 1583. To that era belong the illustrious names of such mariners as Gilbert himself, his half-brother Raleigh, Drake, Hawkins, Frobisher, Willoughby, Chancellor and Grenville. It was the birthday of British maritime supremacy. The second era is the Cromwellian. It is marked not only by the victories of Blake over Spain but by the birth of the Imperial spirit in the writings of Milton, and by the original choice of Westminster Abbey as the burying-place of the mighty dead of the British race. The third era is that of George III, or more properly of Chatham. It was then that Clive created the British Empire in India by his victory at Plassey in 1757, and that Wolfe only two years later created the British Dominion in Canada by his victory on the Heights of Abraham. Citizens of the Empire to-day do not always sufficiently reflect how near both India and Canada came to being parts not of a British but of a French Empire. The fourth and last era is the Victorian. How much the person or the throne of Queen Victoria wrought as an influence upon the extension and the intensification of the imperial sentiment it is perhaps as yet too early to determine; but beyond doubt it was during her reign that the Empire attained its stateliest dignity and became most conscious of its essential and paramount unity.

It may well be hoped then that the *Stories of the British Empire* will do much to foster a true and sane Imperialism, not the mere arrogance of Empire, as if the thought of the sun never setting upon the Dominions of Great Britain were or could be a reason for vain-gloriousness, but a strong and solemn consciousness that the British Empire has been divinely ordered as an instrument of freedom, justice and righteousness.

In commending Miss Machar's book to the reading public in Great Britain and in the Empire at large, I will express the earnest hope that it may help not only to sustain but to elevate the Imperial spirit, and to maintain the character of the English people at home and abroad as being, in Milton's noble words, "a right pious, right honest and right hardy nation."

J. E. C. WELLDON.

THE DEANERY, MANCHESTER,

January, 1913.

FOREWORD

YOUNG readers do not usually take in a preface. This one is for the seniors. These Stories of the British Empire make no claim to be more than a series of glimpses of our great and varied past, gathered round outstanding events or personalities, capable of being made interesting to young folks. The moral purpose which underlies the narrative needs no apology in days when we should all have learned by heart the truth of the words of an eminent Italian historian: "History has no importance but as it contains a moral lesson. It should be explored, not for scenes of carnage, but for instruction, to avoid mistakes, to imitate virtues, to improve by experience, for the science of governing men for their advantage, of developing their individual faculties, intellectual and moral, for their greater happiness."

"With a great sum obtained I this freedom!" exclaimed the Roman Chief Captain, when his Jewish prisoner, in whom *he* could not recognize a great Apostle, claimed the protection due to a Roman citizen in founding the new Christian civilization, which was to preserve all that was good in the old, while inspired with a purifying force and enthusiasm that was all its own.

“ But I was free-born ! ” replied the Apostle, feeling—Jew though he was—a certain pride in this birth-right of free citizenship in the greatest Empire the world had so far known, though it was even then fast decaying through its selfish and reckless disregard of the eternal laws of truth and righteousness. Every child born under the British flag to-day can say, with equal truth, “ I was free-born ! ” Yet it is just as true that, “ with a great price ” this freedom was obtained ; and it were well that all the children of the British Empire—the future citizens on whom its welfare and progress must depend—should learn to realize something of what this price has been.

No one, surely, with any adequate belief in the Divine Ruler of the Universe, can study the wonderful Story of our British Empire without being impressed with a sense of its Divine purpose, its final mission to humanity, as the end for which the shoot of Saxon freedom, planted in British soil, has grown into the greatest Empire this world has ever seen. For, despite all conflicts within and without, all checks, reactions and hindrances arising from human selfishness and self-will, all temporary triumphs of tyranny, we inherit a régime of “ Peace and good-will,” gradually beaten out by our sturdy forefathers, into a just and free government, “ broadening down, from precedent to precedent,” protecting not only the many against the few, but also the few against the many, because founded on the basis of justice, freedom and progress ; and extending these blessings to all quarters of the globe.

It is a great privilege to belong to such an Empire, but it is also a great responsibility. For the “ price ” with which it has been obtained for us has been that of stern

conflict, sacrifice and hard self-denying toil, of precious lives and heroic deeds, which demand that we who enjoy the fruits of such service should be worthy to carry on that for which our forefathers toiled and suffered. A famous historian has truly said that "it is the fear of God which has made England great, and no nation was ever made great by any other fear." If we are to preserve the true greatness of our Empire, our future citizens must be trained from earliest youth to "do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with their God," as the goal of all real education. For only the hands of true freemen can safely guard our much-prized freedom; and we know that—

"He is the freeman, whom the Truth makes free,
And all are slaves beside!"

TO THE YOUNG READER

IN reading this book, please remember that it does not profess to give you a *complete history* of our great British Empire, but only to lead you to feel so much interest in it that you will wish to read more about it. It would be best to read only one chapter at a time, perhaps only one in a week ; and then to *think* about it, to try to realize the appearance of the people and places mentioned in it ; and then to find out all that you can about the events mentioned, from other books. If you have not the right books at hand, ask your teacher or your friends to tell you more. Read any tales about them that you can procure ; especially those of Sir Walter Scott, Charles Kingsley, and Miss Yonge, which—though *not history*—will help you to realize and remember it. Also read Shakespeare's historical plays, when you are old enough to understand them.

In this way you may, by and by, learn to know much of our wonderful British history. And the more you read about it, the more you will like to read of the past life of the British people, of the growth of the British Empire, of its leaders and heroes, and the courage, endurance, sacrifices, faith and devotion which have brought us all so many blessings. To help you to understand and prize these and to strive to pass them on to others is the aim of these "Stories of the British Empire."

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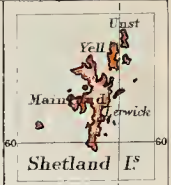
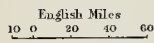
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STORIES OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE

CHAPTER I

BRITAIN AND ITS FIRST PEOPLE

THE story of our great British Empire may be compared to the course of a mighty river, taking its rise from springs hid among the misty hills, and fed by stream after stream, as it winds on its way, till it swells at length into a great and bountiful tide, spreading its waters throughout the world, and bringing larger life and fruitfulness to many a barren soil.

The ancient country of Britain, now called Great Britain—including both England and Scotland—is, as we all know, an island not as large as France, and not nearly so large as the Canadian Province of Ontario. It lies close to the coast of Europe, and nearly in the centre of the land of our globe. In long past ages—we are told—the sea did not cover the English Channel between England and France, so that this island was then part of the mainland of Europe. We know very little of the people inhabiting it in those days, for they wrote no histories. But we know something about them, just as we know something about the people who

then lived in other parts of Europe ;—that is, by finding bones of men and animals, and by other remains of the strange, savage life they led. Britain was then much colder than it is now ; and since animals as well as men could come from Europe by land, many large and strange creatures, such as elephants and great bears, haunted the shaggy pine forests that then covered much of the country.

The earliest people who lived there, so far as we know, belonged to what is called the Old Stone Age. The man of that age seems to have been short and thick-set, with heavy overhanging brow, and the keen look of a wild animal in his eyes. He is supposed to have been dark-skinned, with shaggy black hair. He lived in the woods, and found shelter chiefly in caves. He might, therefore, be called the *cave-man*, as the great bears of that age were called cave-bears.

Many people of our own time have tried to find out all they can about these strange people, and one well-known Canadian writer, Grant Allen, has made for us a picture of the daily life of one of these cave-families many, many years ago.

He fancies the little, active, shaggy brown-haired boys awakened from their sound slumbers by the early morning sunshine, and creeping out of their dark cave, looking sharply about them, lest some beast of prey should be lurking near. As they had no clothes to put on, and no lessons to learn, they were soon hunting for crayfish or mussels in the river close by, and chattering away to each other in a sort of baby-talk that we should not have been able to understand. Their father, meantime, watched them from where he sat, at the mouth of the cave, patiently fashioning a coarse needle out of a

piece of bone, while the mother was hard at work, rubbing two pieces of wood together, till they made a spark to light her fire, piled up with dry sticks and leaves.

When the fire was kindled, such food as they had was roughly cooked ; and the family sat down to eat their breakfast in the dark cave, for it would not have been safe to do so outside. They had no tea nor coffee, nor grain food of any kind ; but perhaps they had a bit of reindeer venison or rhinoceros steak, or a small bird or two. Or perhaps they had nothing but the shellfish which the children had gathered, though, in summer, they might have wild berries or seeds to eat with these. These children knew no more of dainties than of lessons, but they grew up tough and hardy, or they could not have lived at all. For when the game was scarce or the weather cold, they must often have been in danger of starving, and sometimes, indeed, must have starved outright.

After breakfast, the father would take out his stone hatchet, fixed with deerskin thongs into a split wooden handle, and would steal watchfully through the forest, lest some crouching wolverine or cave-lion should pounce upon him unawares. We may well wonder how, with such poor weapons as he had, he could tackle even a reindeer and kill it, but he must have been both strong and skilful at the work. At home, the mother would sit at the cave-mouth, always carefully watching over her playing children, while she sewed skins roughly together for winter clothing, with her bone needle, threaded with the sinews of beasts or strong fibres. The children had many ways of amusing themselves, searching for round pebbles for sling-stones,

or curious little ones for necklaces, or making whistles out of bones. Or perhaps they had, after all, a lesson or two to learn, in drilling holes in bone, or in chipping flint, so that they might know how to make needles and hatchets like their father.

It is not likely that there would be any lunch or dinner for any of them, but the children would generally find some roots or berries to keep them from being too hungry before their father's return, towards evening, with such game as he had been able to find. If he had killed a musk-ox, or a reindeer, they would all go to help him to drag it home, and would be kept busy for a while, in skinning and cutting it up, and putting away the meat not directly required. Then a big fire would be lighted, perhaps from the ashes of the morning one ; and when the meat had been cooked, they would all be more than ready for supper, and, after supper, glad to creep into their bed of leaves. In the long evenings, when the father was not too tired with his hunt, he would sometimes take up a great tusk which he had found, and amuse himself and his children by making on it a rough carving, perhaps of a man killing a deer. When it was finished, it might make a handle for one of his flint knives, or a present for one of his children.

After this fashion lived the very earliest Britons of whom we know anything. But in time a great change passed over the land. A cold time, called the "Ice Age," drove away all the animals that can live only in warm countries. The land that joined Britain with Europe sank after a time, or was swept away by a tidal wave, so that the ocean now flowed between, and made Britain an island. The climate became much milder, the forests taller and richer, and

another sort of men lived there, called the New Stone Age people. These are believed to have been dark-haired, dark-eyed, short and sturdy, and steady and faithful in character. Their descendants lived long in Wales, and when Cæsar came to Britain he found there the dark-haired people called Silures, as well as a fair-haired race, called Celts. These two races gradually mingled with each other; so that, in Ireland especially, there are many dark-haired Celts.

The New Stone Age people also seem to have lived a good deal underground, and their old homes are found in some parts of England yet, called "pit camps." One long pit, five feet deep, had a rough fireplace of stones piled together, on which stood a broken cooking-pot of baked clay. Around it were strewn bones of animals that had been used for food, such as red deer, young horse, hares, birds and fish. Stone pounders, rough flint knives, arrow-heads and hammer-stones were found near. There was also a rude hand-mill—a flat stone worn into a small hole in the centre—in which the grain could be crushed with a pounding-stone. There was some rude pottery, too, and one tiny cup,—the most carefully moulded—was probably used for the baby's feeding-cup. Some beads and sharpened boar's teeth, scattered about the floor, had served, no doubt, for necklaces.

The people who dwelt in this pit-home must have lived early in the New Stone Age, for many other relics of that Age show much skill and taste. Most of these have been found in burial-places, as if the people thought their dead friends would need them in another life. These burial-places were not caves, but were sometimes marked by heaps of great stones, or by

loose mounds covered with earth, now called "barrows," from their shape. There were also memorial stones called "cromlechs," and some were like the famous great group of Stonehenge, of whose origin nothing is really known. By digging into these mounds, there have been found many bones of the dead buried there, as well as of the animals which they killed for food. There, also, have been found flint arrow-heads, knives, drills, daggers, stone clubs and hammers, and even drinking-cups made out of horns, roughly carved with figures of men and animals, which show that the people of this New Stone Age were greatly superior to the men of the Old Stone Age. They lived partly by hunting such animals as still exist in England, but they seem also to have had some domestic animals, such as sheep and goats ; and the dog, man's first and best animal friend, shared their hunts and their repasts. Their rude handmills show that they cultivated some kind of grain. And there has been found even a canoe, hollowed out of the trunk of a tree, containing the stone axe with which it had been hewn out, telling us that they had at least learned to travel a little on the water, so necessary an art for an island people, and always so important for Britain.

These people seem to have been gradually displaced by the Gaels or Celts, and these, in their turn, were driven, by another tribe called Brythons, into the northern hills of the island. The ancient name of that part of Britain was Albyn or Alp-ion, said to have been given to it because of its many hills or "alps," as its Roman name of Caledonia may have been taken from two Celtic words Cal and Dun, meaning hills covered with hazels. The name of Scotia was at first given

to Ireland (or Erin) on account of a tribe of these Gaels, called *Scots*, who settled there, but after a time the West of Caledonia was peopled by them, and thus that country got its modern name of Scotland.

The Brythons, or Britons, who drove the Gaels to the north, are said by some to have got their name from the word *Brith*, meaning the blue colours with which they used to paint their bodies, just as the Picts got their Roman name, meaning "painted people." Perhaps they did this to make themselves look terrible to their enemies, like our North American Indians in later times.

These Britons were tall, fair-haired, strong and brave. They had many fine horses, of which they were very fond, and also cattle, sheep, goats, and other domestic animals (and the British dogs were much prized both for fighting and hunting); while they cultivated their fields as well as pastured their flocks. They were very war-like, and constantly fighting among themselves. They used weapons of bronze, as well as stone clubs and flint arrow-heads, and also made war-chariots, which they could use with great skill in attacking their enemies. But they followed peaceful occupations, too, and a Greek traveller in Britain, many years before the birth of Christ, saw wheat growing in the fields, and barns in which the corn was threshed. They also wove coarse cloth from wool, and used skins of beasts to keep them warm in winter, and the people who lived near the coast used to trade their skins or furs for the fine cloth and golden ornaments brought to them by wandering merchants from the opposite shores. They lived in small huts built of wood and clay, with rounded roofs, pointed at the top.

8 STORIES OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE

They are said to have been divided into as many as thirty tribes, inhabiting different parts of the island, each tribe having a chief, whom they followed into battle. They did not know the true God, but were zealous for their own heathenish worship, taught by stern priests called Druids, who practised strange and cruel rites under great trees, or in thick groves, in which they often offered human sacrifices. These Druids dressed richly in long white or coloured robes, embroidered with gold, with golden ornaments on their legs and arms, and had more power over the people than even their chiefs possessed. As the Britons then lived chiefly on the southern shores of Britain, where the land was fertile and the climate pleasant, the inner portion was still mostly covered with dense forests, through which roamed the wolf and the bear, the goat and the wild boar. Deer abounded in some parts of the island, the otter and the beaver haunted the shores of the winding streams, which were full of various kinds of fish ; while in the great fens or marsh-lands, there lived a vast multitude of water-fowl.

It was not strange that the riches and fertility of this large and beautiful island should become known throughout the continent of Europe, which lay so near ; or that one set of people after another should wish to come in and take it for themselves. The story of such inroads and settlements makes up most of its early history.

CHAPTER II

BOADICEA AND THE ROMANS

B.C. 56—A.D. 410.

AT the time of the birth of Christ, the great people called Romans had conquered the larger part of Europe, as well as portions of Asia and Africa. About fifty years before that time, their famous ruler and General, Julius Cæsar, who had been conquering Gaul—as France was then called—thought that he would like to cross the English Channel, and try to conquer Britain. He had heard much of its beauty and fertility, its tin and copper, even its silver and gold, and the pearls to be found on its shores. Why should he not subdue it, as he had subdued Gaul? So—in the middle of an August night—he set sail from Calais on the French coast, with some ten thousand men and many horses, in about eighty ships, some of them sailing-vessels, while others were galleys swiftly rowed by slaves. Next day the Britons in large numbers watched the approach of these strange Roman ships, from the white cliffs of Dover, beneath which Cæsar had meant to land. But seeing so many warlike figures collected there, he sailed round into a great bay, and anchored his ships near a place now called Deal.

The Roman soldiers were eager to see and conquer this strange island, but almost feared to jump into the surf and struggle to shore, in the face of the fierce painted Britons, who hastened to meet them, driving their war-chariots along the beach. We are told that the standard-bearer of the brave Tenth Legion (or regiment), was the first to leap into the sea, waving the golden eagle of the Legion, and shouting—"Follow me, Romans!"

But though Cæsar and his well-trained soldiers at first overpowered the Britons and forced their way some distance into the country, not much was gained by this attempt, or by another which he made in the following summer, with ten times as many ships and nearly three times as many men. Cæsar won several battles, killed many of the brave Britons, and took one of their best towns, supposed to have been St. Albans. But he lost some of his ships and many horses, through the storms and heavy tides in the rough channel. And after making a sort of treaty with the Britons, he returned to Gaul, believing that he had made Britain a part of the Roman Empire, then the greatest the world had ever seen, though not nearly so great as our own British Empire to-day. He would, no doubt, have come back; but not long after his return, he was murdered at Rome in the midst of his great plans, and Britain was not again disturbed for nearly a hundred years.

At last, in the year A.D. 43, the Emperor Claudius undertook really to conquer Britain; though it took many years to do it. It has been said that the conquest of Britain was begun under the most stupid emperor, carried on under the most wicked, and fin-

ished under the most timid,—that is, under Claudius, Nero and Domitian. Claudius sent over a general named Aulus Plautius, with a great army of fifty thousand men. We are told that many of the soldiers were very unwilling to venture into the strange, unknown island, which seemed to them “out of the world”; and also that great elephants were sent over in the ships to push through the bogs and dense forests in their way. The Britons were not well prepared; but they made a stout resistance. Aulus fought several fierce battles and set up his camp near the Thames. Claudius himself came over soon after, but found that only a small part of Britain acknowledged his rule. One brave general after another led the Legions through the country against the Britons, and afterwards against the fierce Scots and the “painted people” of the North. These last, however, they could not subdue.

One of the bravest of the British chiefs was Caradoc, called Caractacus by the Romans, who, after long fighting, was driven into the western hills, where for a time he found refuge. On a hillside in Shropshire, which is almost a part of Wales, he again made a stand, and lost his last battle against the Roman soldiers. These, with their helmets and round shields, their spears and clubs, were well armed against the bows and arrows and javelins of his naked Britons, who had only small shields of basket-work covered with leather, to protect them from the Roman swords and spears.

Caractacus fled for his life to a neighbouring tribe, but was basely given up by their queen to the Romans, and was sent with his family—a prisoner—to Rome. There every one wanted to see the brave British chief,

who had so long defied the Roman legions. But when he saw the stately pillared palaces and temples of the proud city, he asked, in wonder, why a people possessing such riches and grandeur should wish to rob him and his people of the poor huts they called homes. He was marched through Rome in chains at the end of a long train of his people, laden with spoils from Britain and brought before the Emperor and Empress. There, with brave look and bearing, he said to them, among other things :—

“ I lately had subjects, horses, men, arms, and riches at my command. What wonder if I was unwilling to lose them ? If you Romans desire to rule over all, must all tamely accept slavery ? If you destroy me, it will soon be forgotten. If you save my life, I shall always be an example of your mercy ! ” Claudius could not resist the truth and justice of these words, and ordered that the noble chief and his family should be set free and treated with all due respect—he himself honouring brave Caractacus with his own friendship.

We have a much sadder story in that of Boadicea, Queen of the Iceni, who lived in the counties now called Norfolk and Suffolk, and had been very badly treated by wicked Roman officers and soldiers. On the death of her husband, who had been friendly to the Romans, they had seized all her possessions, insulted her and her daughters, and plundered her country and people. Driven to desperation, she called out her warriors, and led them to battle against the Romans, while their general, Suetonius, was absent, fighting with the Druids in the Isle of Anglesea. At first the Britons were victorious, and slew many of the Romans. The sea-ports of London fell into their hands, and other

Roman towns were taken, and the people in them slain without mercy.

But Suetonius soon came back and collected a larger army, with which he met Boadicea and her allied tribes in battle. The Britons had been so sure of another victory that they had brought their families with them, in waggons, which they placed in the rear of their lines. The vengeful Queen, in her royal robes, drove in her chariot, with her two daughters at her feet, round her whole army, calling upon her countrymen to avenge her wrongs and their own, and deliver their land from slavery. But the well-trained Roman soldiers stood firm in their ranks till the Britons had used all their darts. Then they rushed upon them with their swords, before which the Britons soon gave way, and were caught among their own waggons in their retreat. So great was the slaughter that some eighty thousand are said to have fallen before the Roman swords. Boadicea, unable to bear the defeat, put an end to her life by poison, for she had told her army that she, though a woman, was determined to conquer or die. Because of her wrongs and her courage, Boadicea is, to this day, held in honour as a British heroine, and there now stands, near Westminster Palace, where the British Parliament meets, a fine statue of this heroic queen, standing in her chariot, spear in hand, in the attitude of leading her troops into battle. Beneath it is carved this verse, from a poem written about her by the poet Cowper :—

“Regions Caesar never knew
Thy posterity shall sway;
Where his eagles never flew,—
None invincible as they!”

And though, as we shall see, the English people, who came later, were of a different race, still there is a large mingling of the "posterity" of her people in the Britain of to-day. About two centuries after Boadicea, an ancient tradition tells how a Roman General named Constantius—afterwards Emperor—loved and married the beautiful daughter of a British inn-keeper, who became the famous Empress Helena. She was the mother of the first Christian Emperor Constantine, who was proclaimed Emperor at the old town of York in Britain, where his father Constantius died.

But it was the brave and wise Roman General Agricola who finally made Britain a Roman province, from the English Channel to the Scottish Grampians. He sailed round Britain in the first Roman ship ever seen in those seas, conquered the far-off Orkney Isles, and said, afterwards, that if he had had another legion, he would have conquered Ireland. While among the Scottish hills, he had to fight with a brave Caledonian chief called Galgacus, who collected a great army and called upon his warriors to make a stand against these enemies of their country, and drive them from their shores. But the well-armed Roman legions were too much for even the fierce Caledonians. After a long and bloody battle, these were killed or dispersed and the Romans found themselves the victors on a desolate plain, covered with burning villages and bodies of the dead, for war is always a cruel destroyer. In order to defend the southern part of Britain from these northern tribes, Agricola built a line of forts across the narrow portion of Scotland, between the Firths of Forth and Tay, partly connected by a turf wall. He did what he could to civilize the Britons, and forced the

Romans under him to treat them with justice, instead of robbing and oppressing them, as they had been doing before.

In time, many of the Roman people came to settle in Britain, towns were built and great roads made, so that the troops could march quickly from one to another. They cut down the woods to make cornfields, and the richer men among them built fine mansions of stone and brick, very different from the huts of the Britons, made of branches and mud. Many of these were called "villas," and surrounded by beautiful gardens; and the rich Romans got numbers of poor Britons to live beside them to cultivate their fields, and take care of their cattle. Mines of iron and lead and tin were now worked by the labour of the Britons. They also learned from their masters how to build houses and temples, to dress and live in a more civilized way, and also to speak the Latin tongue. The Romans brought their own money with them; and many of their coins, stamped with the heads of Roman emperors, have been dug up in Britain. By and by the country began to look much more settled, and there grew up many fine cities, the largest of which was London. Many towers, also, were built for defence, the remains of which may still be seen; for the Romans, you see, were a thorough people, and built for future ages.

During all this time, our Christian religion was spreading through the Roman Empire, and it began to take root in Britain. Even some of the Roman soldiers had given up their pagan gods, and loved and served Christ. We are told of a British King called Lucius, who built the first Christian church at Winchester, in the second century. There were certainly many Chris-

tians in Britain at the time of a great persecution under the Emperor Diocletian, in which the Britons shared ; for we hear of the heroic death of their first Christian martyr, Alban, from whom the town and cathedral of St. Albans take their name. Christian churches began to rise beside the Roman temples in the "white towns in the valleys"—by the rivers and the sea. Besides the busy sea port of London, where the Romans built a strong tower, there were fine fortified towns like York and Lincoln, with frequent churches and many fruitful manors. One of the finest of these was Bath; to which many sick people came to be cured by its famous mineral waters ; and there may still be seen the remains of the wonderful bath-houses, adorned with statues of Roman gods and emperors. There, too, might then have been seen people from Rome and other countries, Generals with their guard of soldiers, magistrates in their Roman chairs, merchants and philosophers, feather-sellers and fortune-tellers, goldsmiths and soldiers, and ambitious young Britons who liked to wear the Roman toga or gown, and to look just like Romans.

Several others of the Roman emperors came, at different times, to visit Britain. Among these was Hadrian, who, in order to protect the country from the Scots and the little "painted people," or Picts, built a great wall of clay and brick, eighty miles long, from the Tyne to the Solway. The good Antonine came later, and built a strong wall farther north, where Agricola had built his forts. But this wall seems to have been hastily deserted, and the space between left to the barbarians. Afterwards came the Emperor Severus, who, in his brave old age, led his troops into

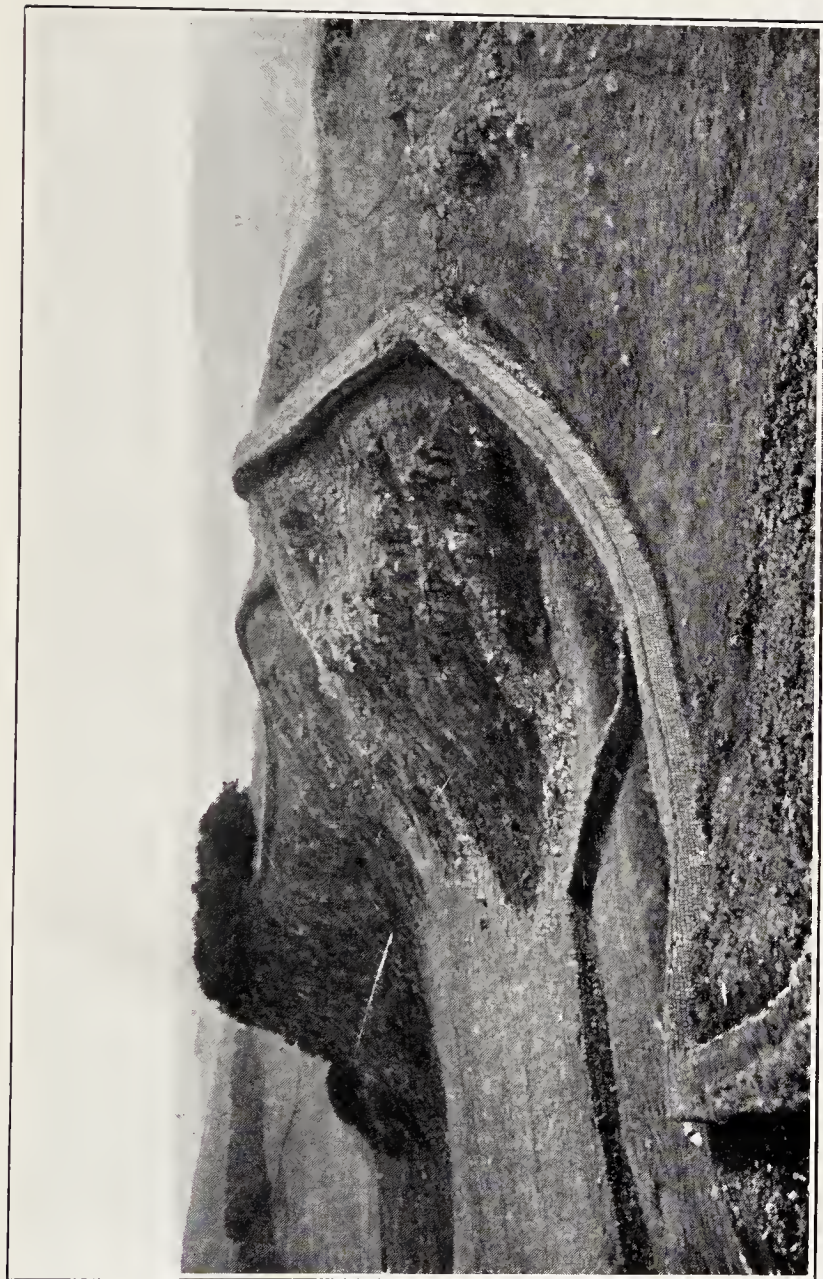


Photo: Valentine, Dundee.]

ROMAN WALL, HAYDON BRIDGE.

the heart of wild Caledonia, and forced the fierce Scots to beg for peace. And as he found the wall of Hadrian breaking down, he strengthened it with ramparts of stone, of which some scattered remains are still to be seen. It was thirty feet high, and so broad that three soldiers, with their shields, could walk abreast. On it were built, at short distances, guard-houses for the soldiers, and strong towers armed with catapults, which were great machines for slinging bags of large stones at the enemy.

All along this great Wall there were—about five miles apart—large camps of soldiers taken from all the different lands and races ruled by Rome. They were obliged to stay there, in order to keep order in the country, and drive back the barbarians, and must often have found it a very dull life. Now and then they had a skirmish with the “painted people,” who used to prowl along their side of the Wall at night, to search for the old spear-heads and swords which the soldiers threw into the ditch below it. There were so many camps, that the Wall was like “a long thin town” eighty miles in length. Scattered along its whole length were houses, barracks, granaries, shops, temples and theatres. Above these towered The Wall, bristling with its towers and castles. To this “town” there used to come all manner of travellers and pedlars, hunters leading muzzled wolves and chained bears for a show; while horse-racing, cock-fighting, wolf-baiting and other cruel sports went on for the amusement of the idle soldiers.

Sometimes, also, peaceable Picts came to sell ponies or wolf-hounds, and would tell the soldiers all about their wild countrymen, who took care to keep out of

the way of the Roman spears, when the soldiers went out to burn the heather on which their sheep grazed, and from whose lovely purple bloom their bees gathered honey in summer. But sometimes the soldiers would put a sprig of heather on their breasts as a sign of peace, and would go out with the "tame" Picts, to hunt bears or wolves in the wild and boggy country beyond the Wall. However, it was, at best, a dull and dreary life for the fierce and restless soldiers of the proud Roman Legions.

But they were soon to have enough to do, elsewhere. The people of Rome had now grown lazy, luxurious and vicious in their prosperity, and had forgotten both how to fight and how to rule. And—what was worse—they had taught the barbarians how to conquer *them*. Rome itself was now threatened on all sides, and the Romans had to call back their Legions from Britain. This proved a great misfortune to the now peaceful people there—both Roman and British—who, also, had forgotten how to fight their warlike foes, the Picts and Scots. They were soon obliged to send to Rome an urgent petition asking for soldiers to save the Roman Province of Britain from destruction. Twice a Legion was sent to the rescue, which routed the invaders for the time. But as Rome could not spare her troops to remain long in Britain, these did what they could to strengthen the Wall, and then they were obliged to go back to Rome and leave the British people to fight for themselves.

But these were now too weak and helpless to hold the Wall against the Picts, who soon found this out, and began to over-run the country, while the fierce pirates they called "Northmen" attacked them by sea.

In vain they sent again to Rome a piteous appeal, saying that "the barbarians drive us to the sea, and the sea throws us back to the barbarians, so that we have nothing left us but the wretched choice of perishing by the sword or by the waves."

But Rome could do nothing for them, for she was falling to pieces before the terrible Alaric, King of the conquering Goths, and was forced to leave Britain to its fate. And now another great danger was threatening the unhappy island. For a long time the shores of Britain had been infested by bands of dreaded warriors called "sea-wolves" by the British, who came in their boats, and made great havoc wherever they landed, plundering and slaying all that they found in their way. These fierce people were greatly feared by the Picts also, whom they easily put to flight. When, therefore, the poor Britons found that they were in danger of being crushed by the northern barbarians on the one side, and the "sea-wolves" on the other, they called their chief men together to consider what it was best to do. Then—it is said—it occurred to the British chief Vortigern, King of the Silures, to ask the pirates to help them against the Picts—the wolves to shepherd the sheep! How this plan succeeded, and who these fierce strangers were, we shall presently see.

CHAPTER III

THE FOREFATHERS OF THE ENGLISH

IF the story of the British Empire may be compared to the course of a mighty river, that of the English people may be compared to a noble tree, growing from a small shoot, which was planted in a fertile soil. There it was nourished by the rain and the sunshine, strengthened by the storms that threatened to destroy it, and enriched with healthy grafts, until it spread its lusty branches to all the winds of heaven, and bore much wholesome fruit for the nations of the earth. The soil in which this shoot was planted was the country we now know as England. And the shoot itself was a portion of the race from which the "sea-wolves" came.

While the Britons had been hunting and fighting in their sea-girt island, and while the Romans had been taming and teaching that savage race, a strong and hardy people had been growing up on the other side of the North Sea. England was to get her name and character from these people, who were called Angles or Engles. Their country, Engle-land, lay between the North Sea and the Baltic. It was a cold and barren country, very different from fertile Britain, with great wastes of heather and sand near the sea,

much of the land being covered with forests. The people were a part of the great German race, some of whom were called "Franks," meaning Freemen, on account of their love of liberty. And out of these ancient forests, we are told, came the root of the free government of our great British Empire.

These people did not live in towns, or even in what we call villages, but in rude homesteads surrounded by their land, on which they raised grain as their only crop. They did not always till the same land, for they would often move, for the sake of wood or water, from place to place. They knew very little about building or other useful work, and lived in very rough houses of wood or earth, thatched (or roofed) with straw. They were great hunters, and depended, for much of their food, on the animals they hunted. As the climate was cold, the men wore tight-fitting coats of skins, and a short fur mantle fastened on the shoulder with a clasp or a large thorn. The women wore longer mantles, over long white tunics (or loose coats), often adorned with purple spots. The children grew up strong and active, carefully nursed by their mothers, whom they loved and honoured, for the Saxons paid much respect to women.

These freemen were accustomed to govern themselves, instead of having chiefs who ruled as they pleased. Ten of their little homesteads made up a "tun," i.e., town or township. The householders used to meet together to settle their affairs and appoint one of themselves to be headman or "ealdorman." These "tuns" were also called *neighbourships*, for the people were good neighbours to one another, and if any family suffered from fire, loss of cattle, or

any other misfortune, the others helped to make up for it. If any one were guilty of a crime, they united to punish or expel him, and in war-time or hunting, they went out in a company.

Then there were higher chiefs who looked after the order and justice of a whole district, and kept dogs to destroy the wolves, foxes and other harmful beasts. For this service the people paid him part of their corn. And there were still higher chiefs called " earls " who possessed much land and were chosen by the people, and were often succeeded by their sons. They were " companions " of the king, who ruled over all, and was chosen by a council of the wisest men, which was called " Witan-gemot."

The children were brought up to endure cold and hardship, and help in necessary work. The boys learned to wrestle, to hunt and to fight. The girls carried the fuel for the cooking, and often tended the cattle and even held the plough.

To show a little of their life, we shall describe one important day in the life of a young Saxon. Two fair-haired, blue-eyed lads were near neighbours—the father of Wulfgar being an ordinary freeman, while the father of Egfrid was one of the head-men, whose larger house occupied more ground than the rest, in the village. Each of the boys, when only a few months old, had been tested by being set alone on the sloping thatched roof of his home, and as neither had cried or seemed afraid, both were considered boys of the right sort. Egfrid's father had some slaves, for even these " freemen " made slaves of captives taken in war. His mother, therefore, had servants to carry wood and other burdens and to attend to the cattle ; but she

herself carefully tended her children, of whom she was very fond.

This particular day was a bright one for her, as her eldest boy Egfrid had reached his fifteenth birthday, and was now to be pronounced a man, who would henceforth have the right to carry arms. Wulfgar, though some years older, had always been a great friend of Egfrid's and had taught him to run, to swim, to ride and to wrestle; and Egfrid was proud of his brave friend and all the manly things he could do.

On this fine spring morning, Egfrid rose early and bathed in the stream close by. Then he dressed more carefully than usual, for his mother had made him a new suit of calf-skin curiously marked with bright colour, and a mantle, also of skin, adorned with shining pieces of fish-skin which glittered like silver in the sunshine. When he was ready, his mother felt very proud of her tall, handsome boy. Wulfgar had not such fine clothes, but he did not mind that, for he excelled in manly exercises and sports, and a mantle like Egfrid's would only have been in his way to-day, since he was to wrestle and dance before the assembly in honour of Egfrid's birthday.

At length the breakfast of curd or cheese, with parched corn and whey, was finished, and they all set out. Egfrid's father led the way, mounted on his best horse. The next best was led by Wulfgar, who carried the gaily painted round shield and spear provided for young Egfrid, and presented to him by the father of the maiden Elsa, intended to be his wife some day.

By and by they came to a little hill where they found the other people assembled with their families. Presently Egfrid's father made a speech, in which he told

all that his son could now do, and said he trusted that the lad would be a worthy freeman. Then Egfrid received the shield and spear, and was told he must always use them for the good of his family and people. All present raised a shout of approval, and Egfrid, proud and smiling, leapt upon his beloved horse, and galloped about to show his friends how well he could ride. After this a number of the other lads gathered round him, and gladly he named his friend Wulfgar as the first of the companions who were to be with him in hunting and in war. Then followed some games, in one of which Wulfgar and other active young men danced between rows of drawn swords and spears, placed on the ground before them, while Egfrid looked on, proud of his friend's skill, and longing for the time when he himself might perform such feats. When this had come to an end the assembly broke up. Some of the men joined the procession which went to the house of Wulfgar's promised bride, and escorted her to the house of her future husband. Egfrid and his father then galloped home, while the rest of the family followed more slowly in their waggon, drawn by their shaggy oxen.

Egfrid's father had bidden his kinsmen to a feast which was set on tables around which all sat, disdaining to lounge lazily after the manner of the Romans. At this feast Egfrid sat for the first time with the men, of whom he was now one, and his father informed the company that he and Elsa were now to be considered betrothed, though they were not to be married for some years. Then the men began to talk of the next time they should go hunting, or of the prospect of war with some of their distant neighbours, while Egfrid went to

talk with his mother over this great day, and what he should do now that he had become a man.

Such was the sort of life lived by the race from which sprang the Saxon "sea-wolves" or Northmen, who had learned to find their way across the North Sea, to plunder the coasts of Britain. Most of them were of three tribes—the Saxons, who lived in the country of Saxony, the Engles, who came from Angle-land, near Sleswick, and the Jutes, who came from the country of Denmark. As their numbers were increasing, and their country was not fertile, they longed to settle down in the fair fields of Britain. The Saxons had two great captains—brothers—named Hengist and Horsa, who came in their ships to plunder the shores of Kent. Then, owing to his great fear of the Picts and Scots, Vortigern, King of the Britons, in A.D. 449, sent messengers to make friends with them, and to ask their help against the northern savages; offering them the isle of Thanet, near the mouth of the Thames, as a settlement for themselves, because it was then separated from the rest of the country by a broad arm of the sea.

Hengist and Horsa willingly accepted the invitation, and landed on a low sandy point, called Ebbsfleet, not far from the place where Caesar had landed five hundred years before. At first, the plan seemed to work very well, as the Saxons had the island all to themselves, and there was only one difficult ford between it and the mainland. But many more Saxons soon came to join them, and more still continued to come, till they found the island too small; and then, in spite of the resistance of Vortigern, they pushed their way farther inland, till a great battle was fought at a

place called Aylesford. There the Saxons under Hengist conquered the Britons under Vortimer, the son of Vortigern. After this, there were many fierce battles between the Britons and the Saxons; but the latter gradually overran and subdued the country, till the richer people of Roman descent fled in terror across the sea, and the poor Britons were either slain, or driven to find refuge among the rocks and hills, with their war-like kindred of Wales. Many of them, also, crossed to the opposite coast of France, where they settled in the province called Brittany.

After the Saxons who first came to Thanet, there came the West Saxons, who made their abode in the south of England, and after them the Engles, who subdued for themselves, the old land of Boadicea, which they called Northfolk and Southfolk, or East Anglia, and who, in time, gave to the whole of Southern Britain, the name of ENGLAND. The Saxons did not care to live in the Roman towns, and barbarously destroyed both towns and churches. Sometimes priests and people were cruelly slain or burned together in the churches where they had taken refuge, for their pagan conquerors had neither reverence nor pity. And as most of the Christians in Britain were either killed or driven away, the Christian religion seemed almost forgotten in England, for the Saxons worshipped heathen gods, such as Woden, Thor, and Freya, from which have come the names we still use for some of the days of the week.

The three Saxon tribes who first entered Britain called their kingdoms Wessex, Kent and East Anglia; but the Saxons still pushed on their way West and North till they had founded several other kingdoms.

and as there were at last seven of these, they were called the "*Heptarchy*." But the southern kingdom of Wessex, with its great leader, Cerdic, became, in the end, the head kingdom of England, uniting it, at last, into one kingdom.

While Cerdic, King of Wessex, was pushing his conquests westward, he met with the most valiant resistance from the British tribes who had taken refuge in Mount Badon, near the present city of Bath. It has been said that they were then assisted by the brave and noble Arthur, king of the tribe called Silures, about whom many old tales and poems have been written, some of which Tennyson has put into beautiful verse for us in the *Idylls of the King*. It is certain, at any rate, that there was a pause in the Saxon conquest of that part of England, which we like to think was due to the prowess of Arthur and his "Knights of the Round Table."

In the course of a century, the whole of Southern Britain had been subdued, plundered, and almost entirely laid waste by the Saxons, now divided into seven kingdoms. Each chief had about him a chosen band of companions called *Thanes*, who received from him gifts of land in return for the service they gave him. Under these there were many lesser thanes and "ceorls," or farmers, who cultivated the land. The prisoners taken in war became slaves, as all their children also were forced to be, and this growing number of people in bondage remained long a source of great weakness and evil to the nation.

The story of this conquest of Southern Britain by the heathen English or Saxons, is one long tale of fighting and destruction. But the time came when the heathen

idols must make way for the worship of the true God, which gradually changed the temper and character of the rough Saxons. The next story, instead of war and fighting, is one of the love and mercy brought into the world by the gospel of Christ.

CHAPTER IV

THE STORY OF ST. COLUMBA

528-605

WHEN the Saxons had over-run and desolated England, it seemed as if they had trampled out all the light and knowledge that had come to it during the rule of the Romans. So little was heard of Britain for a long time, that it was sometimes called the "Island of Silence and Death"; and strange stories grew up about it.

But there was some light yet left among the hills to which many Christian Britons had been driven by the fierce Saxons. Caledonia or Albyn—as Scotland was then called—was still half barbarous, but the light of the gospel had been brought into it and carried on to the adjoining isle of Erin by the brave Christian hero St. Patrick. He had been carried off from Scotland, when a lad of sixteen, and had been a shepherd boy for his Irish master. Having been well taught at home, he learned, while tending his sheep among the hills, to know and love "the Lord his Shepherd."

Some years later, he went to study in Gaul, to become a better teacher, and then came back to Ireland, where he had learned to know the people and their ways. He used to gather them about him in the

open fields, to tell them the story of the Gospel. The stern Druid priests tried to stir up the people against his teaching, but it found its way to their hearts. Some of the young men became his followers, and even some of the Druids began to compose Christian hymns, instead of their old pagan songs. Some of the chiefs gave St. Patrick land where his young men could settle down in huts which they built, and learn in time to teach others. They studied together, and St. Patrick taught them to translate parts of the Bible into their own language; and in time there were so many good men in these schools, that Ireland was often called the "Isle of the Saints."

Among the young men who studied there a little later, was an Irish prince, whom we know as "St. Columba." The beautiful story of his life gives us some idea of the countries through which he wandered, teaching the people the gospel of Christ. Columba belonged to a noble family called O'Neil, nearly connected with the Irish kings, and had been a student in one of the schools or brotherhoods founded by St. Patrick. These were called "cloisters," because of the covered galleries in which the students or "brothers" could walk and work in good weather, for their rooms were very small. Many of these cloisters are yet to be seen in the old English abbeys or "monasteries" as these Schools soon came to be called.

From his childhood, Columba seems to have desired to love and serve God, in his own wild way. He was an active but dreamy boy, kind and helpful, loving God and the right, so far as he knew them. He was full of affection and good impulses, and hated injustice with all his heart; but in his youth he let his passionate

temper carry him into violence and wrong-doing, of which he afterwards deeply repented. His story pictures for us the life of those early times, and shows us how—by the grace of God—he attained the true goodness which have made men call him St. Columba, and honour the places where he lived and worked.

He was fond of study, and loved poetry ; but like his companions, he used to work with his hands as well as his head, and he always tried to do it well. When it was his turn to grind the corn for the next day's food—for they had few mills in those days—he did it so well and so quickly as to make his companions declare that an angel must have come to help him. His royal descent seems to have gained for him some privileges which sometimes made his comrades jealous, till they were reminded that, if he had not given himself to a life of study and devotion, he might in time have been a king of Ireland.

The large abbey in which he chiefly studied, under a great teacher named Finnian, was filled with young students anxious to learn all they could of the best wisdom. Columba loved also to study the old poems of his people, handed down from one bard (or singer) to another. One of these came to live near the abbey, to learn from Finnian how to improve his crops, and in return gave him some of his poems.

One day he was sitting outside with the old bard, studying some of the poems, when a young girl, chased by a robber, ran up to them for refuge. But before they had time to help her, the robber had killed her and fled. The old man cried out in horror—"how can God leave such wicked deeds unpunished?" "Only for a moment," exclaimed Columba, as the murderer

fell dead. If Columba had his good bow and arrow beside him, we should be apt to think that a well-aimed arrow had avenged the crime. But the legend says nothing about this. The sight of such evil deeds often made Columba feel how much that half-barbarous land needed the preaching of the Gospel.

Before Columba was twenty-five, he is said to have founded thirty-seven religious schools or abbeys in Ireland. One of these was Derry, a place famous in our history, and much loved by Columba, who wrote of it in after years, when far away in Scotland :—

“ I love my beautiful Derry
 For its quietness and its purity,
 For heaven’s angels that come and go
 Under every leaf of the oaks.
 I love my beautiful Derry ! ”

Columba wrote other poems, sometimes in Latin, frequently in his native Irish tongue, and, two centuries afterwards, a number of these still existed. He always kindly entertained the Irish bards, for he had much of their adventurous and passionate nature, and this, along with his love of study, brought about his first trouble. Books were very scarce and very precious in those days, for there were none but those written by hand. Very few people were happy enough to possess a copy of even part of the Bible. Columba very much wished to have a copy of the Psalms for his own ; but the only one within his reach belonged to his old master Finnian, and was always kept in the church. It seems strange that Finnian should not have been willing to let him copy it, but we are told that he had to do this by stealth at night, shutting himself up in the church alone. When Finnian found this out

through a spy who looked in through the key-hole, he was very angry, and insisted on having the copy which Columba had made, which he indignantly refused to give up. But his own cousin King Dermot gave judgment against him in words which have become a proverb—"to every cow her calf—to every book its copy." And so the copy had to stay with the book.

Columba was very angry at this, but soon a much worse thing happened. A young prince who had killed some one by accident, took refuge in his cloister, but was seized and killed by the king's order. The anger of Columba now knew no bounds. He boldly rebuked his royal cousin, and said that he would see him no more till God, the just Judge, should have subdued his pride. But Columba's own pride needed to be subdued ; for the insult offered to him and his cloister in the killing of the young prince was a chief cause of his anger. He made his way at once by night, over the mountains, to muster his friends, cheering his lonely way by singing an ancient Irish hymn of trust in God.

Columba had no difficulty in stirring up his powerful friends of another branch of the royal race. Aided by the father of the murdered prince, they fought a battle with King Dermot at a place called Cool-Drewny, in which the king was routed and many were slain. But Columba was soon made to feel, by the rebukes of his friends and by his own conscience, that he had done a great wrong in stirring up a strife which had cost so many lives. He asked the advice of one of his truest friends, a good old man who lived in a cloister on a little island in the Atlantic. This man told him that he must leave his beloved island, and go to preach to the heathen Picts of Caledonia, where he must try to

convert as many people as had been killed in the battle.

This was a hard saying for Columba, for he dearly loved his native land. But, choosing twelve companions to go with him, he prepared to depart. At this time he was about forty years old, and was a noble-looking man, remarkable for his height, his sweet and powerful voice, his frank yet stately bearing, and his grey Irish eyes, which could soften with pity for suffering, or flash out in anger at some wicked deed.

One bright morning in May, 565, he and his twelve comrades, all kinsmen and kindred in spirit, embarked at Derry in their *curragh*, or boat of raw hide stretched over a frame of wicker-work. It was sixty feet long, and in it the brave missionaries stowed away their goods. There were no swords or shields, or other weapons of war. But there were carpenters' and blacksmiths' tools, and rude mattocks and hoes for tilling the land, a fishing net, sacks of oats and barley for seed or food, a quern or handmill for grinding, and leathern bottles of water and of milk. In the safest, and driest place they carefully laid a wallet of skin containing their precious written books or book-skins. These were copies of the Holy Scriptures, with some poems and hymns, and parchments for writing new copies, with pens and ink, and wax tablets for hasty notes.

The missionaries had their foreheads shaven and wore white tunics, over which they had long robes of undyed wool, made with a hood for covering their heads at need. They often walked bare-foot, but sometimes wore shoes made of hide. All being ready, the little band took their seats in the boat—St. Columba at the helm—and set out on their voyage, steering

down the beautiful bay of Lough Foyle, for Albyn or Scotland.

They first landed at an island called Oronsay, and Columba climbed a hill to look about him. But his beloved Erin was still in sight, and he thought he could not bear to live where he could still see the dear homeland. Farther on they went till they reached the lonely little isle now called Iona, near the great island of Mull. On the hill-side a cairn marks the spot from which they looked far to sea, but beheld no trace of Erin. This, Columba thought, would do for their secluded abode, especially as it was situated between the home of his relative the king of "Scots," who were Christians only in name, and that of Brude, king of the heathen Picts, who reigned at Inverness.

The missionaries soon set to work to build a few little dwellings called "kills" or "cells." It was from this name that Columba got his name of "Columkill," which means "Dove of the cell." These were mostly huts of wickerwork and clay. The little church was built of oaken logs brought from the island of Mull, and was thatched with rushes. One hut served as a refectory or dining-room, where they all took their meals, and one was a guest-house for visitors. Another was a carpenter's shop, and around them all was built a wall of earth and stone. They had also to build outhouses for their farm : for near the spot there was a green meadow in which they at once proceeded to sow their grain, in the hope of a good harvest. Columba helped in this, as in other things, for he thought no toil beneath him in serving his Divine Master. But the work he liked best was that of studying and copying parts of the Scriptures ; and he and his monks are

said to have written a great many such copies to give away to the people.

As soon as he and his companions were settled, Columba began to preach to the Irish Scots on the neighbouring shore. He and his friends wandered far afoot among the grand hills and lonely lakes of the wild Highlands, winning the people to listen to his fine voice and the wonderful chants he sang. Young men began to come to the little settlement to learn from him, and, as time passed, many sought the lonely isle to ask for alms or simple medicines for their bodies, or for help for their souls. Often the Abbot and his companions would hear, from the opposite shore, a shout which told them that some tired pilgrim was there, waiting to be taken across. Columba, who had gradually become one of the gentlest and humblest of men, would himself lead the strangers to the little guest-house. There he would bathe their dusty feet, and inquire what trouble had brought them thither. His kindly sympathy was truly said to be his most eloquent preaching, and helped him to bring these ignorant yet simple souls to receive the religion he taught. Kind and tender to all human beings, he was a friend to the dumb animals also, and we are told a beautiful story of his sending one of his monks to care for a poor stork which had dropped exhausted on her way to Ireland, and enabling her—rested and refreshed—to continue her flight to his own beloved land.

After labouring for some time among the people of his own race, he felt that he must go to the Picts, also, and he made a journey to the capital of their king, Brude, on the banks of the Ness. Brude did not fancy a visitor from the royal race of the Scots, and

the Druid priests tried to keep him at a distance. But Columba was not discouraged, though the gates of the king's fortress were closed at his approach. He and his companions only prayed more earnestly for success, and, as it was time for "even-song," they began to chant their psalms, Columba's grand voice sounding above all the rest. The king, who wondered at the conduct of these strange visitors, caused the gates to be opened, and listened attentively to Columba. From that time he gave his protection to him and his friends, who went about, preaching through the whole of that northern land.

After Columba had been eleven years labouring in Iona, he was called to bless the coronation of a new king of the Scots colony there. It is the first time that we hear of a coronation in Britain, and the old story says that the king was crowned, seated on a great stone called the "Stone of Destiny," supposed to have once been Jacob's pillow. This stone was taken, long after, to Dunstaffnage Castle, near Staffa, and then to the Abbey of Scone in Perthshire, where the old Scottish kings were crowned. It was carried away by Edward I when he tried to conquer Scotland, and, ever since, has had its place in the coronation chair in Westminster Abbey.

Columba had to return to Ireland, after all, for two important purposes. One was, to obtain freedom for the kingdom of Scotland from paying tribute to the Irish king, as its "over-lord." Another object of his visit was to come to the help of his friends the bards. These had, in general, been greatly honoured for the songs in which they preserved the brave deeds of old times. At the royal table they often had a

place next to the king, and their favour was greatly sought by those who wished to have their fame preserved in these verses. But sometimes they stirred up great trouble by these, and a new Irish king proposed that they should all be banished. Columba, who was a poet himself, and knew what exile was, pleaded their cause, and won his case; and the bards showed their gratitude by singing his praises in songs which were known and sung for a hundred years after.

Columba afterwards made journeys to Ireland, to look after the abbeys he had founded, and was treated by every one with the greatest respect. But he always remained humble and kind, and helpful to the suffering and the poor. In his large family at Iona were many young "Christian soldiers," ready for the humblest tasks or the most distant journeys. It is said that there were "three times fifty" there at one time, seventy of whom were appointed to row their leathern barks across the sea. For now they had a whole fleet of small *curraghs*, which they used for their journeys, or for carrying the oak timber which they cut down in the great oak forests of Mull. They sailed far to the north of the Orkneys, reached the Shetland Isles and—it is said—even distant Iceland, where the first church bore the name of Columba. During storms, the Abbot followed his monks with his thoughts, and spent much time in prayer for those at sea.

We are told many stories of his sympathy with people in trouble. One day he met, in a highland pass, a poor man upon whose home lawless robbers had made a raid. "My good man," he said, "thy poor cattle and thy little all have fallen into the hands of the robbers; but thy dear little family is safe. Go home and be com-

forted !” At another time he walked out into the sea, to try to stop a boat which was carrying off the goods of a humble friend, and sternly reproached the lawless robber.

He had been more than thirty years labouring in Iona, and had founded many missionary settlements in Northern Britain, when the time came for him to leave his friends and his work below. He knew that the end was near, and as he was not now able to walk as in former days, he was taken, in a car drawn by oxen, to say farewell to his faithful friends who tilled the little farm. They wept at his farewell, but he comforted and blessed them and the island itself. Soon after he went, with his faithful servant Dermot, to see the granary, filled with its great heaps of grain, and said that he was glad that his “ dear family of Iona ” was not likely to suffer want. On his way back he sat down on a stone to rest, when the old white horse that carried the milk vessels from the farm to the monastery came to lay its head lovingly on his shoulder. Columba said it had come to take leave of him, and caressed and blessed it. Then he climbed, with difficulty, to the top of a low hill and again blessed the dear island on which he looked for the last time.

Returning to his own little dwelling he went on with the copying he loved to do. He was writing the thirty-fourth Psalm, and he finished the verse, “ They that seek the Lord shall not lack any good thing.” Then he said that his friend and cousin Baithen, who was to be his successor, would write the rest. He went to the evening service before the Sabbath, and then, sitting on his hard bed, he left it as his dying charge to his friends that peace and charity should ever reign

among them. In his youth, he had not always been a peace-maker, but now he felt that the peace-makers are truly the "children of God." In the morning, Columba was the first to reach the church, where his faithful servant Dermot found him lying, unable to speak. Turning a look of serene joy on the "children" he loved, he passed quietly through death to the fullness of life.

Columba left many followers or disciples who were called Culdees, and were long the honoured religious teachers of North Britain. They were very earnest and simple in their teaching, and the historian Bede tells us that, being shut out from the rest of the world, they sought to teach and practise only the precepts which they found in the Hebrew prophets and the teaching of Christ and His Apostles. They lived the religion which they taught, and that was the best preaching of all.

CHAPTER V

QUEEN BERTHA AND KING EDWIN

A.D. 596-633

ABOUT thirty years after Columba left Ireland to preach to the Picts and Scots of North Britain, the first great missionary, Augustine, came from Rome to bring the same gospel to the heathen Saxons of the south. This was one of the greatest events in English history, for, with the Christian faith, there gradually came also the learning and good laws which have made the foundations of our British Empire.

At that time a brave and wise king, named Ethelbert, ruled the kingdom of Kent, which was the first of the Saxon kingdoms, and had become the most powerful. He had brought from Gaul to his home at Canterbury his queen, Bertha, daughter of the Christian king of Paris. She had been brought up a Christian, and took with her to her new home her chaplain, Luithard, who, no doubt, exhorted her to be a good wife to Ethelbert, so that he might be won over to the Christian faith. At Canterbury there was an old British church which had not been destroyed by the Saxons. In this she and her attendants used to worship God, and no doubt she often prayed that her husband might become a Christian, though that seemed far off, for he was much attached to his pagan worship.

But a strong helper was at hand. Far away in Italy, the good Bishop of Rome, now known to us as Pope Gregory the Great, had long been planning and praying for the conversion of heathen Britain. Some years before this time, while he was still abbot of a monastery there, he was walking one day through a market-place in Rome, whose broken pillars may still be seen. There he saw some beautiful boys with fair skins and golden hair—captives in war—waiting to be sold as slaves, like many other British prisoners before. He asked who they were, and was told that they were “*Angli*” from the country of “*Deira*,” under a king named Ella. “They should be called ‘*Angeli*,’ or angels,” he exclaimed, “and by God’s grace, their country shall be saved from God’s anger (= *de irâ*), and ‘*Alleluia*’ shall be sung in it!” From that time he thought much about sending the gospel to Britain, and bought all the Saxon youths he saw offered for sale, so that they might be taught, and go back as missionaries to their own land. He even set out on this mission himself, but was on the way called back to Rome, where he soon after became Pope Gregory.

Before long, however, he made his plan for having the gospel preached in Britain. He had heard of the marriage of Ethelbert, and thought that this would give him a good opportunity. He chose a pious monk named Augustine, and sent him, with forty companions, on the mission to the king of Kent. On the way, the missionaries—not so brave as Gregory—were alarmed by stories they heard about the state of things in Britain, and wrote to Pope Gregory to ask his permission to return. But he sent them a letter, exhorting them to have faith in God, whose work they

were going to do, and telling them that it is better not to begin a good work than to begin it and turn back.

Encouraged by these brave words, Augustine and his company went on their way, and landed, in A.D. 597, at Ebbsfleet, in the Isle of Thanet, just where Hengist and Horsa are said to have landed before them. From thence they sent a message to King Ethelbert, through some of their people, who spoke the Saxon language. The king sent word to them to remain on the island, and provided for their needs. A few days after, he visited them there, receiving them in the open air, lest they might practise some magic arts on him. The Roman strangers came to him, carrying, not the Roman eagles of Cæsar, but a silver cross, for their banner ; and, after singing the Litany, they offered up prayer for the salvation of the king and his people.

Ethelbert considered Augustine's message, but would give no promise, except that of protection, to the strangers. Soon afterwards, the little company of Christian teachers entered Canterbury with much ceremony, carrying their silver cross, and chanting their hymns of praise. Then indeed there sounded, through the streets of the old city, the joyful "Alleluia" which Gregory had hoped should yet be sung in the home of the Angles. And so there came back to Kent the Christian faith which the Saxons had tried to crush out a century before.

Augustine and his companions at first conducted their services in the old church where Queen Bertha used to worship, and no doubt the queen and her chaplain rejoiced in having this band of holy men to help them to be faithful in a heathen land. They

brought back, also, the old Roman tongue in which she had been accustomed to hear praise and prayer. It was the beginning of many good things, and much new life for the English people, who now began to learn the wisdom of the past, and to hear many great and noble thoughts, which soon took root in their hearts.

Besides the old British church in which they first preached and baptized, the strangers found also a large old Roman temple. In time a new church was built there, on the spot where now stands the beautiful old Cathedral of Canterbury, the church of the Primate of England. Augustine also built near the city a large house called St. Augustine's Abbey, where he and his companions lived and taught.

A year after this, King Ethelbert, having listened attentively to the preaching of the missionaries, accepted the truths they taught, and received Christian baptism, which was a great joy to Queen Bertha. But, being a wise king, he would not force upon his subjects his own new faith, knowing that it must be received by the heart. Thousands of them, however, were led by his example to listen to the preachers, and most of them were baptized. He tried also to persuade the neighbouring kings, of Wessex and East Anglia, to do the same; but they would not listen to him. One of the churches he built was the first church of St. Paul's in London, but the Christian religion did not spread much there. Ethelbert was the first king who made written laws for the English people.

His son, King Eadbald, was not like his father, and did so many evil deeds that the Roman bishops thought they would have to leave his kingdom. But when

Eadbald heard this, he began to feel ashamed, and begged Laurentius, who was left, to remain, sending for the others to return. After that, he tried to do right himself and to bring his heathen to do the same, but he never was able to do what his father Ethelbert had done.

Meantime the kingdom of Northumbria went on growing stronger, under a young king named Edwin, who soon brought the people of Mid-Britain under his power. This prince wanted for his wife the Princess Ethelberga of Kent, the daughter of King Ethelbert and Queen Bertha. As she was a Christian, her brother Eadbald at first refused to let her be the wife of a pagan like Edwin. But Edwin promised that he would let her follow her own faith and worship without hindrance, and that he himself would learn all about it, and would embrace it if he should become sure of its truth.

Accordingly, Ethelberga came to York, Edwin's capital, to be his queen, and, like her mother, Queen Bertha, to try to win her husband to the true faith. With her went a Roman priest named Paulinus, a tall, pale, dark-haired man, who preached often to the heathen people. King Edwin heard him with attention, and thought much about what he heard.

In the following year, a strange thing happened to Edwin. The king of the West Saxons, who was his enemy, sent a man to stab him, unawares, with a poisoned dagger. The man came to him on Easter Sunday, pretending that he had a message from his master. Then, when close to the king, he suddenly drew his dagger and tried to strike him. But one of his most trusty courtiers, named Lilla, threw himself

between Edwin and his assassin, who was quickly killed by the king's men. The dagger pierced the body of Lilla, and even wounded the king, who was long in recovering from the injury. That very night a little daughter was born to him, and in gratitude for her birth and his own escape, he promised that if God should give him victory over the king who had sent the murderer, he would cast away his idols and worship Christ.

As soon as he returned victorious, he got the good Paulinus to instruct him, and then he used to sit long alone, in silence, considering what it was right for him to do. Just then both he and Queen Ethelberga received kind letters from Pope Boniface, earnestly entreating them to turn from the worship of lifeless idols to serve the true God, and urging the queen to labour and pray for the salvation of her husband and of the nation he ruled. He sent them both some costly gifts—to the king a rich robe and a gold ornament, to the queen, a silver mirror and a gilt ivory comb, which showed that he knew what would please a lady.

Touched by the Pope's kind letter, and by the remembrance of a strange vision he had had in his youth, Edwin called together his wisest men to consult about accepting the new religion. One of these wise men was a heathen priest called Coifi, and he at once answered that he thought the old religion was of no use, for it did not seem to do anything for the people, and that if the new doctrine should prove itself able to do more, he thought they should receive it without delay.

Then an older and wiser man arose, and spoke a beautiful parable, in which he compared the short life of man in this world to the swift flight of a sparrow

through the warm, comfortable room in which the king used to sit with his friends at supper. It flew in from the storm and rain, and immediately darted out at the other door, vanishing into the winter from whence it came. "So," he said, "this life of man appears but a short space; but of what went before, or of what is to follow, we are utterly ignorant. If, therefore, this new doctrine contains something more certain, it seems justly to deserve to be followed."

Others spoke to the same effect, and Coifi asked that Paulinus should explain to them the Christian faith. After he had heard his words, he declared that, while he had never been able to find in their old worship the truth he sought, he now believed that the new religion brought to them salvation and eternal life. He therefore advised that the old religion should be given up, and said that he was ready, as the former high-priest, to lead the way in destroying the idols he had taught the people to worship. Mounting the king's horse, and carrying a sword and spear—which the priests used to be forbidden to do—he rode straight to the idol temple, drove his spear into the idols, and set fire to the temple.

King Edwin was baptized on the next Easter Sunday (A.D. 627) in the old city of York, in a small church which he had built of wood, where now stands a grand Cathedral. He afterwards began to build a larger church of stone, which he did not live to finish. He lived six years after his baptism, during which Paulinus preached constantly, and baptized many people, among them some of the nobles of the land. At one time he went with the king and queen to their country-house, and remained there for more than a month,

instructing them and baptizing many in the river Glen, close by.

King Edwin also persuaded the king of the East Saxons to receive the Christian faith. His father had seemed converted in Kent, but had gone back, and tried to worship God and idols at the same time. Paulinus also carried the gospel across the Humber into what is now Lincolnshire, and, having converted the governor of Lincoln, with his family, he built a stone church in the place where now stands the stately Cathedral of Lincoln.

The kingdom which King Edwin ruled was now a happy and peaceful one. It was said that a woman with her babe might walk from one end of it to the other without fear of harm. He was so careful for the good of his people that, wherever he saw a clear stream near the highway, he caused a stake to be fixed, with a brass cup hanging from it, so that travellers might drink and be refreshed. And no one dared to touch them for any other purpose. King Edwin was greatly honoured by his people; and, even in time of peace, when he rode about the country, with his officers, a standard-bearer used to go before him, carrying a long spear with a round tuft of feathers at the end of it, such as the Romans had been wont to use.

But while he was still in the prime of life, King Edwin was killed in battle by Penda, the war-like heathen king who made Mercia a strong kingdom. Then Paulinus took Queen Ethelberga and her children to Kent by sea, where they were safe under the protection of King Eadbald. It was a sad home-coming for the queen and her children.

CHAPTER VI

ÄIDAN AND CUTHBERT

633-685

WHEN King Edwin fell on the field of battle, there was great grief and trouble in his kingdom. The savage heathen King Penda and the barbarian British chief Cadwalla—no less savage, although he pretended to be a Christian—ravaged the country most cruelly, killing the people, sparing neither women nor children, and paying no respect to the Christian worship which Edwin had established among his people.

The kingdom of Northumbria now broke again into two parts, called Deira and Bernicia. The former took for its king Osric, and Bernicia Eanfrid, both of them descended from former kings. Both had been brought up in the Christian faith, but when they became kings they forsook the worship of the true God, and turned back to that of idols. Soon, however, the fierce Cadwalla slew Osric in battle, and, about a year after, killed Eanfrid also, who came to him with twelve companions to beg for peace. The Northumbrians so hated the memory of the tyrant Cadwalla, and of that miserable year, that they dropped these two kings out of their reckoning, and added a year to the reign of the next king, Oswald, who was indeed worthy to be the successor of the good King Edwin.

This young prince, Oswald, had, during these troublous times, been living with the rest of his family among the Scots in Caledonia. He had been a pupil in Columba's school at Iona, and had been there carefully taught in the Christian religion. Unlike his brother Eanfrid, he was true to his faith. And, as the Christian worship and practices of the time of King Edwin had been almost entirely broken up, and many of the Christians killed or dispersed, Oswald sent messengers to Iona to beg for some Christian missionaries. The first who came had very little success, and soon went back to tell his brethren that it was of no use to preach to a people so barbarous and so stubborn. One of the brethren, whose name was Áidan, asked him whether the trouble was in the stubbornness of the people or in the harshness of the teacher. On this, they all declared that Áidan, whose kindness and gentleness they all knew, was the man to undertake the mission.

King Oswald received him gladly, and gave him a quiet abode at a place called Lindisfarne on the sea coast, which, twice a day, is made an island by the tide. Here he lived and taught, wandering about on foot, like Columba, to preach to the poor ignorant people. Áidan did not then know much of the Saxon tongue, but the king, who spoke both the language of the Scots and that of the English, would frequently explain his words. In time, other Christian teachers came from Caledonia, and churches were built or rebuilt. The people came in crowds to hear the gospel and to receive baptism, and the king gave money and land to found Christian schools or settlements, like the one which grew up at Lindisfarne. There these

Christian teachers—or monks, as they began to be called—lived together and taught many of the English who came to be their scholars. From these monasteries or abbeys there came in time not only Christian teaching but other kinds of learning and many useful arts.

But the chief one long continued to be that of Lindisfarne, where Áidan lived and set an example of zeal and industry to all his pupils. They daily and diligently studied the holy scripture, learned to chant the psalms at their services, and carefully wrote out copies of these, or translated them into the Saxon tongue. Áidan, too, like Columba, lived what he taught, for we are told that he was so devoted to his work of converting the people, that he neither sought nor loved anything of this world, but delighted in immediately distributing among the poor all that was given to himself.

He continued to go about the country on foot, refusing to ride, unless compelled by necessity. He would converse kindly with all he met, rich or poor, and if they were still heathen, would try to persuade them to be Christians, or if they were so already he would try to confirm their faith and stir them up to live rightly. In the meantime, Oswald, reigning as a true Christian king, gained great power and influence. The Britons of Strathclyde submitted to him on the north and the Saxons of Wessex on the south. He is said to have thus ruled over people speaking four languages, those of the Britons, the Picts, the Scots and the English. Wherever he ruled, he tried to spread the blessings of the Christian faith. Yet with all his power and success he kept the humble, kind and generous char-

acter which led his people to love him and to regard him afterwards as a saint.

Beautiful stories have come down to us of his goodness and kindness. One of these tells how he was once sitting at dinner with Bishop Aidan, with a silver dish full of dainties before him. One of his servants, to whom he had entrusted the care of the poor, came to tell him that a number of destitute people were sitting outside, begging for help. Oswald immediately ordered that the dish should be taken out, and the hungry fed. Then the dish itself was cut in pieces and divided among them. Aidan was so pleased with this that he took the king's right hand and said, "May this hand never perish!" Another story tells of the first battle fought with Cadwalla. Being in great anxiety about the issue of the day, he had a large wooden cross made in great haste. This he planted in the ground, and called his troops to kneel at its foot and to pray that "the true and living God Almighty would defend us from the haughty and fierce enemy; for He knows that we have undertaken a just war for the safety of our nation." His men at dawn marched to fight, and gained a complete victory, leaving Cadwalla slain on the field. This place was called Heaven-field, and on the spot where the cross was planted, a Christian church was afterwards built in memory of this great deliverance.

King Oswald married the daughter of a Christian king, Cynegils of Wessex, who lived at the royal city of Dorchester on the Thames. But when Oswald had reigned only about nine years, he—like Edwin—was killed in a great battle with the pagan king of the Mercians, and was much mourned by his people.

Äidan lived some years longer, doing all he could for the people about him. But Oswy, Oswald's brother, who succeeded him, was a very different man. He killed the good Oswin of Edwin's race, who ruled over part of Oswald's kingdom, and who was so good a man that Äidan sorrowfully foretold his early death, because the nation was not worthy of so good a ruler. Penda was still at work, pursuing, killing and destroying. At one time, when Äidan was in his island home at Lindisfarne, he saw that Penda, unable to get possession of the royal fortress of Bamborough, had pulled down the cottages around it, and piled the wrecks about the castle walls. Then he set fire to them, so that a fair wind should blow the flames upon the town. When Äidan saw the fire and smoke rising about the wooden walls, he exclaimed, "Behold, Lord, how great mischief Penda does!" Then the wind suddenly changed, and blew the flames back on the besiegers.

Seventeen years Äidan worked for the good of the people of England, and died at one of the king's country-seats, worn out by his unceasing labours. He was buried at Lindisfarne, where he left a band of teachers whom he had trained, living and struggling and working together, as he had done, for the people he loved.

One of Äidan's friends was a famous abbess named Hilda, a wise and noble Christian lady who was a grandniece of King Edwin, and founded another monastery called Whitby. It was built on a rocky cliff, looking down on the bay in which the river Esk meets the German Ocean. To it came many good people, who were, perhaps, too ready to take shelter

there from the rough world outside, and live there in peace, studying, the Bible and occupying themselves in works of charity. From it, in course of time, came several great bishops and famous teachers in the Christian Church.

One of the most famous persons who lived in this monastery was the first Anglo-Saxon poet known to us by name, who was a poor working brother called Caedmon. He had never thought that he could write poetry, and when the others used to sing at table verses of their own making, Caedmon would rise up, when he saw the harp coming his way, and would go out to tend his cattle. One night, when he had fallen asleep beside the horses he had been feeding, he had a beautiful dream, in which he saw One who had said to him—"Caedmon, sing some song to me." He replied, "I know not how to sing, and because of this I left the feast." "Yet," said the One who talked with him, "you must sing to me." "What shall I sing?" replied Caedmon. "The beginning of created things," was the reply. And immediately Caedmon began to sing in his sleep, a hymn in praise of the Creator.

In the morning he told his dream to the steward, who brought him to the abbess herself. She at once saw that a great gift had been bestowed upon him, and encouraged him to go on and use it. So he continued, day by day, to frame and sing a long poem concerning the creation and history of the world, and its sin and redemption, which has ever since, been held in high esteem as the beginning of English poetry. The historian Bede said of him, "None could ever compare with him, for he learned the art of poetry not from man but from God."

Among the many learned and famous teachers of those days who founded the colleges called monasteries, and were themselves called monks, there were two specially famous; Wilfrid, who became Archbishop of York, and Benedict Biscop, both of them being young thanes or noblemen. Biscop was a very learned as well as a very able man, and spent much time in travelling to Rome and other countries, to bring back many pictures from sacred history for the churches, which might teach people who could not read; and also other precious things that could not then be made in England. Among these were books, carefully copied out—as there was no printing then—and often skilfully decorated with beautifully painted borders, which the English monks soon also learned to produce. He also brought skilled masons and glaziers, to help in building his fine monasteries.

In his monastery at Wearmouth, we are told, this learned man delighted to take part in all the ordinary work of the farm and the household. He would help to thrash and winnow the grain, to feed the lambs and calves, to cultivate the garden, and even assist in the bake-house and the kitchen, finding in these occupations, exercise and change from the serious duties of study, teaching and daily worship.

Bede himself, the first historian of the Anglo-Saxons, was placed there when only seven years old. As he always loved study, he had early learned well and quickly. When a new monastery called Jarrow was built, Bede was called to be its first abbot, and remained there all the rest of his life. He studied the Bible in the Greek and Latin and even in the Hebrew language. He also learned the art of chanting the

psalms, which had lately been taught by monks from Rome. Like the others, he had to take part in such daily labours as have just been described. But he tells us he "gave his whole attention to the study of the holy Scriptures," and between the hours of his other duties he "always took pleasure in learning or teaching or writing something." At nineteen he was made a deacon, and at thirty he was ordained a priest; but he would never accept the office of an abbot, because the cares of a monastery would take him away from his beloved studies. Besides smaller works on many subjects, he wrote, very fully, the whole story of the Church in England, from the landing of Augustine till the year 731, from which, along with the famous *Anglo-Saxon-Chronicle*, we get most of our knowledge of these old times in England.

Another noble Christian monk, whose history and work were very different from that of Bede, was the great and good Cuthbert, who was born in the Scottish pasturelands, north of the Tweed, then a part of the kingdom of Northumbria. Being left an orphan, he was adopted at eight years of age by a poor widow, and, like King David and St. Patrick, was for years a shepherd's boy. He grew stout and strong, and had a loving and poetic soul. One day, when he hurt his knee, a traveller, wrapped in a white mantle, who bound it up, seemed to him an angel from heaven. When he heard of the death of Bishop Aidan, he thought that the shooting stars he saw at night were the angels carrying the good bishop's soul to heaven. By degrees, his thoughts grew into a desire to live as did the Scots or Culdee missionaries who dwelt in a small cluster of humble cottages at Melrose, where now stand the

still beautiful ruins of that ancient abbey. That country, now full of famous memories, was then a lonely, hilly and often marshy region over which were scattered miserable villages inhabited by poor peasants, most of them really pagans still. Among these, and especially in the rough mountain villages, Cuthbert loved to wander, teaching and preaching, as his Scots friends could not do, in the rude Saxon tongue there spoken. With his stalwart frame and native eloquence, his patience and good sense, and the sweetness and brightness of his look, he made the people feel that he lived in the light of God's countenance. When he was travelling with his friends, hungry and weary among the hills, he would tell his companions to look at the eagle soaring above them. "God can feed us through him, if he will,"—he said, and once, at least, they supped on a fish that dropped from the eagle's beak. At another time, when he was driven ashore by a snowstorm in the Firth of Tay, his comrades dolefully declared that the snow closed up their way along the shore, while the storm barred them from the sea. But he replied, "There is still the way to heaven!" In such rough missionary journeys he sometimes spent a month at a time. But his success as a teacher led his Abbot Eata to take him with him to Lindisfarne, that he might instruct the monks themselves, as well as the peasants who dwelt in the great surrounding moors.

While he was still there, happy in his missionary work, a great dispute arose between the Scots teachers, who were followers of Columba, and the English ones, who followed the teaching of the Roman Church. The chief difference of opinion was as to the exact time when Easter should be observed. The matter was

referred to King Oswy, who decided to follow the Roman rules. The Culdees would not give up the usage to which they had long been accustomed, and, rather than agree to the change, almost all of them left England and went back to their old Scottish home.

Cuthbert, who was now prior at Lindisfarne, was tired of the long dispute about things which he did not think very important, and it was probably for rest and quiet that he left the monastery and retired to a solitary little island near Bamborough, where he built himself a cell or hut of rough stones roofed over with turf. Here he dug a well, and sowed a crop of barley for his simple needs, and lived the life of a hermit.

Before his death, however, when a Roman bishop named Theodore came over to England to divide it all into parishes, another great meeting was held. There it was agreed that such a holy man as Cuthbert could no longer be spared to live in his rocky retreat, and that he must come back to be Bishop of Lindisfarne. He was very unwilling to do this, but the king, with many nobles and monks, went to his hermitage and begged him to consent, which he was at last persuaded to do. Soon after he became Bishop of Lindisfarne, but he did not live to hold his office long. Destructive wars had begun again, and, in the north, the Picts were again rising, and threatening vengeance for a raid which had been made the year before on the native land of Columba. The old bishop anxiously awaited the issue of King Egfrid's inroad into Fife, and seemed to dread to hear the news. When he was told that the king and all the best of his nobles were dead on the field of battle, his heart seemed broken. He gave up his bishopric and went back to his lonely island hut,

where, a few weeks later, he peacefully passed away. A signal light was flashed across the dark stretch of sea to the tower of Lindisfarne, where the watchman soon told the sad news to the monks, who carried his body to be buried in the place where he had laboured so long, and where his name is still held sacred.

CHAPTER VII

ALFRED THE GREAT—ENGLAND'S DARLING

802-880

WE must remember that when England was divided into seven kingdoms, the West Saxon one, under its King Cerdic, gradually became the strongest, until its great King Egbert secured the supreme power over all the rest. Egbert ruled in the old city of Winchester, which has been called the cradle of the British Empire, for, in the year 627, he sent out from that city a decree that all Southern Britain was thenceforth to be called ENGLAND. The grandson of this King Egbert was our noble British hero, Alfred the Great, who is counted the greatest of our English kings, and whose memory is still revered, and beloved, both for what he did and for what he *was*.

Alfred was the fifth son of King Ethelwulf, who succeeded his father Egbert, and during his reign a new race of "sea-wolves" was infesting the shores of Britain. These were the Danish Northmen, who came from Norway or Denmark. They were also called *Vikings* (or "Creekmen"), because these bold seamen used to cross the sea in open boats, with one sail and the figure of a dragon on the prow, in which



MONUMENT OF ALFRED THE GREAT AT WINCHESTER.

they could row up the "creeks," or rivers, and work their way far into the country, to plunder and destroy. They wore some sort of mail, and carried strong shields and huge, two-handled battle-axes, which they wielded without mercy. They did not spare even women or little children, whom they would either slay outright, or carry off as slaves, and they left desolation and mourning wherever they went. They were such expert seamen that they sailed round the stormy northern coasts of Caledonia and Erin, and so to the coast of West Wales. There, by their success in war, they induced the old British Celts, who still lived in Wales, to join them against the English.

While Alfred was growing up, his father, with the help of his two eldest sons, was trying to conquer the Danes and restore peace to his kingdom. He thought it would help him in this to make a pilgrimage to Rome—then a difficult and dangerous journey—and took with him little Alfred, whose mother had died before he was six years old, and when he came back, he married the daughter of the King of France. A year or two later, he sent Alfred again to Rome, where the boy saw much that was grand and interesting, and no doubt learned many things. While there, his charming disposition, along with his open winning face, golden hair and frank blue eyes, made him a great favourite with everybody. The Pope, hearing a false report of the king's death, consecrated the little prince as king, believing that God meant him to fill the English throne. But the time for this was not yet come.

When he returned to England, his noble character made him every year dearer to his father, who delighted

in his companionship. There was very little learning in England then, for most of the monasteries and churches had been burned by the Danes, and the Christian teachers were killed or scattered. We are told that though Alfred had learned to ride, hunt and fight, and to endure hardship, before he was twelve years old, he had not yet learned to read. One day, the queen, was sitting with Alfred and his brothers, reading a book of Saxon poems, beautifully written, with painted borders. Seeing that the boys were charmed with the beautiful book, she said, "I will make a present of this book to the one who shall first learn to read it." Though Alfred was the youngest of the four, he quickly learned the poems, and gained the prize; and, after that, learning and study became his chief delight. He loved to learn by heart these old Saxon poems, such as the song of Caedmon, and also to read the Latin Psalter, and such other books as were within his reach.

At last the day came when, by the death of his third brother Ethelred, whom he had been helping to fight the Danes, Alfred was called to be king, and became the deliverer of his country from these cruel foes. A month after he was crowned at Winchester, and married to a noble Saxon lady named Elswitha, he fought another battle with the Danes, who were again raiding the north. He was able to check them so far that they agreed to leave the country, and marched to London, for winter quarters, whence they might sail in the spring.

But the Danes had no idea of keeping their promises, and they soon began again to carry fire and sword through the country of the Mercians, until their

king, in despair, fled to Rome, where he ended his days in a cloister.

The great abbeys of the country were burned down and the monks who could not escape were slain. Then they dashed into East Anglia, where they bore down all who opposed them. The good king of whom we often hear as Saint Edmund, was taken prisoner, bound to a tree, and shot to death by their arrows.

Alfred and Wessex were now the only hope of the English. A new swarm of Danes arrived under their prince, Guthrum, and Alfred went on collecting new troops and fighting as opportunity offered. We are told that he fought eight battles in one year ! At last the English became so discouraged, that they thought it was useless to fight any longer. Many submitted to the Danes, while others fled sorrowfully across the sea, or took refuge in the mountains of Wales. Alfred vainly tried to rally them once more. But they were too much disheartened, so the king had to let his men save themselves as they could, while he himself—it is said—sought refuge in the dwelling of one of his own cow-herds. Now, the cow-herd's wife had not been told who this poor stranger was, but thought him a wandering loafer, who was glad to avail himself of her husband's kindness. As he was one day sitting by the fireside, trimming his bow and arrows, she asked him to watch the cakes which she had just made and set to toast before the fire. The king willingly promised to do this, but his mind was so full of sad thoughts and anxious cares, that he forgot to turn the cakes. When the good-wife came back, and found her cakes burned, she was very much vexed, and said to the king that he always seemed well pleased to eat her

cakes, though he would not take the trouble to turn them !

By and by, some of Alfred's friends found him out in his hiding-place, and he thought he might venture forth again. He gathered a number of his old fighting men about him, and took refuge with them in a little marshy island in Somersetshire, surrounded by an almost impassable bog. Here he built a little fort, in which he and his small band lived for some time, making raids among the Danes, in order to procure the food they needed. He called the place Ethelingay, or the Isle of Nobles ; but it is now called the Isle of Athelney.

When he and his men had lived hidden for about a year, he heard a piece of good news—that the army of the Danes which had ravaged Wales had been defeated by the Earl (or Governor) of Devonshire and that their sacred raven-banner had been taken. This gave him some hope, and he determined to try once more to rally his troops. But first, in order to judge the strength of the enemy, he disguised himself as a wandering harper, and entered the camp of Prince Guthrum. There he spent some days, entertaining his host with his music, his ballads and his witty talk. He kept his eyes open, and noticed that the Danes had grown very slothful and wasteful, and that, as they now despised the English, they were quite off their guard. He thought *now* was the time to strike a blow ; and called some of his most trusted followers to a place of meeting. Many of them had thought him dead, and, when they saw him standing again among them, they greeted him with loud cheers, feeling that they could now face the enemy once more. They



followed their beloved king with renewed courage, gained a great victory at a place called Ethandune (or Edington) in Wiltshire, and afterwards besieged the Danes in their fortified camp, till they were forced by hunger to surrender.

King Alfred might now have slain all these savage enemies ; but instead of this, he made a generous plan, useful both to them and to his own people. He knew that the whole country north of the Thames had been laid waste by the Danes in the warfare that had been going on. So he proposed that the Danes should settle down there, to earn an honest living, and also act as a defence against further inroads. They very gladly accepted this offer ; but Alfred required, also, that they should promise to become Christians. Prince Guthrum and his captains were all baptized on the spot—Alfred himself promising to see that they should afterwards be fully instructed in the Christian faith.

Alfred could now settle down again in his stronghold of Wolvesey Castle at Winchester, whose massive ruins may still be seen. He had only the old kingdom of Wessex to rule now, but he could rule there in peace. And he had a great work to do there, in restoring order and making good laws. Knowing that "righteousness exalteth a nation," he at once began to repair the ruined churches and abbey-schools, so that his subjects might once more have public worship and good teachers among them. He made just laws for the people, and taught them to observe Christ's Golden Rule—that we should "do unto others as we would have them do unto us." His one thought was to live and work for the good of his kingdom. He tells us, in words preserved for us, that he had never much

desired an earthly kingdom—which, indeed, was then a troublous heritage. But having the work of a king given him to do, he desired that he might be enabled to guide and order it aright. For this purpose he must “have his land fully manned with prayer-men, army-men, and work-men, and the means of living for all these.”

He divided the kingdom, for defence, into small parts, each of which must send an armed man to fight at his order, and must feed and pay him. To guard the coast from Danish raids, he had a large number of ships made on a different pattern from the short clumsy ones of the Danes, being twice as long and much higher, with a figure of some kind on the prow. They were rowed as well as sailed, sometimes with as many as sixty oars, needing seventy or eighty good sailors to manage them, and these were often Danes. He encouraged skilful captains to take long exploring voyages, in order to come back and tell him about Russia and other countries—then scarcely known—beyond the North Sea, and even beyond the North Cape. On their return they came to him at Wolvesey Castle, and told him the tale of their travels, and the king carefully set it down in his diary. Hearing that a settlement of Christians in India was in distress, he sent one of his priests all the way there, to help them. When the priest returned, he brought with him some presents of Indian jewels, and other rare and beautiful things which the English had never seen before.

But Alfred's chief efforts were directed to keep good order all over his kingdom, where there had been much lawless violence. He sent people through the land to

mark down just what belonged to every one, so that there could be no mistakes or disputes. This record was kept in a great book or roll at Winchester. He confirmed all the good laws of the king before him, and made new ones to regulate the conduct of his people, on the foundation of the Golden Rule. By day and night he was watchful to redress injustice, especially to the poor. We are told by one who lived at the time that, "in that whole kingdom, the poor had no helpers, or few, save the king himself." He appointed that all criminals should be tried by a number of their fellow-citizens—that is, by jury, as we have it now. In this work of his, Alfred laid the foundation of the common law of England.

Although he had so many cares on his mind, this hero of fifty-six battles became also a scholar and a writer. But it was through great diligence and the best use of his time. It has often been told how he divided his day into three parts—eight hours for business, eight for study and prayer, and eight—not for sleep alone, but for sleep, exercise and meals. Thus he could not have slept nearly eight hours. As there were no clocks in those days, he used to burn candles, marked off so as to measure the time.

In his hours of study Alfred must have worked hard, for though he did not know much of the great Greek and Roman writers, he learned and loved the history, as well as the poems and songs of his own people. He even prepared a history of his own country and is said to have written part of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, which tells us much about those times. He was the one English author of his age, and translated much from earlier writers who wrote in Latin, more particu-

larly the history written by the "Venerable Bede." He used also to put in many fine thoughts of his own, and—besides translating the fables of Æsop from the Greek—he made fables and stories in verse, in order to teach his people the lessons he wished them to lay to heart.

"During the troubled years that had passed, there had been little quiet for learning among the people. Few in his kingdom knew how to read, and when Alfred began to reign, he did not know one who could read or explain the Latin Book of Prayers in English. He determined that the English should be better taught now, and made a law that at least every free-born boy should "abide at his books" till he could read well. With the help of his own old teacher, who was Bishop Swithun, sometimes called the "Weather Saint," he founded a fine school at Winchester, and also a monastery at his old refuge, the Isle of Athelney, in grateful memory of the time when he sought shelter there. But in all that he said or did, he was ever truly humble, and in a book that he translated he begs that he may not be blamed if he has not understood it perfectly, since every one must say what he says and do what he does according to his ability. And in a note to the same book, he nobly says : "I have wished to live worthily while I lived, and after my life, to leave to men who should come after me my memory in good deeds."

These great works of peace were interrupted by new and savage raids of the Danes, under a great leader named Hasting, who came with three hundred long ships like those Alfred had built. The king collected a strong force, routed the invaders and drove them

across the Thames, following them as they rowed towards Wales, and defeated them with great slaughter. He also had to hold Exeter against his old enemies, whose prince, Guthrum, was now dead. But he soon proved too strong for the Danes, and after some hard fighting, they were all defeated. Their last attempt was made under a pirate captain from Northumbria, who had built ships even higher, longer and swifter than those of Alfred's fleet. But the king, seeing this, soon built still higher, longer and swifter vessels than those of his enemy. He captured some of them, and then did the only severe deed of his reign, which he thought necessary for the peace of his kingdom. He tried his prisoners at Winchester, and hanged them as "pirates and enemies of mankind."

The last few years of Alfred's life were spent in settling the peace of the kingdom, which now extended over all England. He then made London his capital, restoring it from its ruined condition, and there the wise men of the people met twice a year. He kept an army of workmen employed in rebuilding the ruined towns, abbeys and churches, and so encouraged useful arts that much skilful work was now done there, even in silver and gold. In all these ways, and many more, he well deserved the good name given to him—"Shepherd of his people."

King Alfred, though strong and nobly formed, had long suffered from a disease probably brought on by his many hard experiences in fighting the Danes; and he did not live to reign quite thirty years. But the glory of his reign did not depend upon its length. He found England a ruined and distracted land. He left it a happy, prosperous and peaceful country. And his

great work was done because he had learned the true wisdom—to “do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with his God.” To the last, he was busied in translating the Psalms into Anglo-Saxon, but, before this was finished, his spirit passed from this world to the higher life. Amid the sorrow and tears of the nation, the mortal remains of Alfred the Truth-teller, the Shepherd of his people, England’s Darling, were laid to rest in peace at Winchester.

CHAPTER VIII

DUNSTAN AND THE DANES

880-988

KING ALFRED'S eldest son Edward was as great a soldier and almost as good a king as his father. Alfred's daughter, Ethelfleda, who had married the king of the Mercians, was a very wise and brave woman, who looked after her people and built fortresses to protect them from the Danes. She was called the Lady of Mercia, and after her husband's death, she and her brother Edward did much for the good of her kingdom. When she died, Edward united the kingdom of Mercia with his own, Wessex. He also became Lord of Northumbria, sometimes called "the Danelaw," because it had been settled by the Danes. But Edward soon died, and was succeeded by his son Athelstan. This young king had, when a golden-haired child, received from his grandfather Alfred a sword in a golden scabbard with a jewelled belt, which was understood to make him a knight. How true a knight he was will be shown by a story that comes down to us from these old times.

He had a stormy time of it with his northern subjects, and sometimes the Danes would still come over to try to settle in England. At one time four kings or chiefs of the Northmen came to England with

their ships and soldiers. Watching till King Athelstan's ships were out of sight, they landed, to seize a part of the country. But when Athelstan heard of it, he collected his troops and went to meet these chiefs at a place called Brunanburh, in the north. There he fought, in the year 937, a famous battle, in which he conquered them and took some of them prisoners.

One of these prisoners was called Egil, and he afterwards used to tell how kindly King Athelstan behaved to all the defeated people after the battle, and would not permit his soldiers to annoy them in any way. He himself invited Egil and some of the other prisoners to sup with him at his large house near Brunanburh. This house was very long and very broad, but not high, for it was like a cottage, and there was no fire anywhere but in the kitchen and the great hall. There were no carpets on the floors, which were strewn over with rushes or reeds, and there were only wooden benches and high stools to sit upon, though no doubt there were silver flagons and drinking cups on the table. This was just the kind of rooms that King Alfred had in Wolvesey Castle.

They sat down to supper in the great hall, and after supper the king asked the company to go and sit round the fire, and drink ale and mead (i.e., a sweet drink made from honey). The fireplace was not at the side of the hall, but there was a great stone hearth in the middle of the floor, on which a large fire was made of great logs of wood. There was no chimney, but the smoke went out at a hole in the roof of the hall. King Athelstan made Egil sit on a high stool opposite him, and he laid his long and broad sword across his knees, lest any of the company should be disposed to quarrel.

As they drank their ale and their mead, minstrels came and sang to them about the great battles and warriors of the past ; and the strangers sang in their turn, too, so that they had a very jolly evening.

The next morning, when Egil and his friends were expecting to be sent to prison, King Athelstan came and told them that he liked brave and clever men, and if they would promise not to trouble England any more, they might go home in peace. They willingly promised this, and Athelstan sent them home with valuable gifts. Other Danes came, however, and when Athelstan's victory was forgotten, continued their raids. After this story, we are not surprised to learn that the other kings of Europe were glad and proud to be counted the friends of so brave and gallant a king, and that even the king of Norway sent him a fine ship gorgeous with purple sails, and rows of glittering shields. But when he died, and his young brother Edmund succeeded him, the Danes again rebelled against England. In the end, however, Edmund made an alliance with the Scots, and the Danes of Northumbria became submissive to his rule.

While Athelstan was still king, there was growing up in a little hamlet called Glastonbury, a boy small and delicate, with fair and silky hair, the son of a rich thane. Like Columba and Alfred, he loved poetry and music, and learned to sing to his harp the old songs and chants of the ancient times. So fond was he of his harp, that he would carry it with him on his journeys and visits to his father's friends, when he was often called upon to entertain the company. But he loved all kinds of learning so much, that, at one time, he studied till his brain gave way. By and by

the fame of his knowledge reached the court of King Athelstan, and he was invited thither, as the king, we know, liked to have about him learned and gifted men. But though many of the courtiers were Dunstan's relatives and friends, there was so much jealousy of his favour with the king that he was obliged to return to his quiet home.

When Edmund became king, he also called the young scholar to visit him at court. But again bitter jealousy drove him away. Perhaps Dunstan showed himself too proud of his learning, and that made him disliked. At any rate his cowardly foes lay in wait for him as he was riding home through the marshes, and brutally trampled him under foot in the mud. This barbarous treatment gave young Dunstan a great shock, and brought on a fever. When he recovered, he made up his mind to become a monk, and went to live in a monastery.

But he was not so entirely devoted to the quiet life there as were Aidan and Cuthbert. He loved, not only learning, but also art and music. Always busy and lively, the round of the convent life was too dull for him, especially as the monks had in time grown rather lazy and formal. So he was glad to become chaplain to a noble and wealthy lady who, as we are told, lived only for charity and the entertainment of the pilgrims. For, at that time, it was a fashion for pilgrims to make journeys from one monastery to another. At this lady's mansion he found many pupils, whom he instructed in learning, music, drawing and designing, and would sometimes draw patterns for decorating books as well as for the robes the ladies loved to embroider. There is still preserved in the great library

at Oxford, a picture drawn by him, representing the Saviour, with himself kneeling at His feet, signed in his own handwriting.

When this noble lady died, Dunstan was again called to court by King Edmund. But it seemed as if the old jealousies could not be forgotten. Even the king became unfriendly to him, and he thought he must again depart. But an unexpected thing happened. The king was hunting a red deer near Cheddar in Somersetshire, when the frightened creature leaped over the cliff, and Edmund thought his horse must go over too. During the few seconds while he was expecting instant death, the king thought that he had been unjust to Dunstan, and his conscience troubled him. But the horse stopped short of the brink, and the king was saved.

When he returned to his palace, he called Dunstan to saddle his horse and ride forth with him. Then, with his train following, he rode with Dunstan straight to his old home, the monastery of Glastonbury. There the King made Dunstan sit down in the abbot's chair, and, with a kiss of peace, greeted him as abbot of Glastonbury, which he ruled for some years and which he afterwards rebuilt.

Not long after, King Edmund was killed by a robber named Leofa, and Eadred, his youngest brother, became king. Dunstan seemed to come at once to the front as the king's chief counsellor, and he probably advised that Eadred should be proclaimed not only "King of the Anglo-Saxons," but also "Cæsar or Emperor of the whole of Britain." For Wulfstan of York as well as the Archbishop of Canterbury blessed his coronation, and the Northumbrian "Witan" pledged their faith

to this national king. But this unity was of short duration, for they soon set up a king of their own, named Eric, though Eadred's prompt action soon put down the rebellion for the time.

The next reign was an unhappy one, for Eadred's nephew Edwy was a foolish boy, too much influenced by a lady whose daughter he married, and soon quarrelled with Dunstan and the other counsellors of his father. Dunstan was driven into exile, but this did not last long. Archbishop Odo separated Edwy from his wife, and the people of Mercia and Northumbria chose his brother Edgar, then a boy of sixteen, for their king. Edwy died soon after this, and then the kingdom was once more united under Edgar, while Dunstan was recalled from his exile, and became Bishop of Worcester and then of London, and latterly Archbishop of Canterbury. Here he ruled for sixteen years, next in power to the King himself. So powerful did Edgar become, that, when he went to visit the North, we are told that six vassal kings or chiefs rowed him in his boat on the river Dee. And he was called "*Edgar the Peaceable*," because he had a fleet large enough to protect his kingdom from invasion, and so to keep it in peace.

Dunstan seems to have used his power for the good of the whole kingdom, rather than for a part of it, though people found fault with him for giving too much power to the Danes, and too much love to strangers. They also found fault with the king for encouraging foreign vices and heathen customs. But Dunstan kept the Danes content, by preserving for them their old Danish rights, "with as good laws as they might choose."

He protected commerce, by his laws concerning coinage and weights and measures, and sternly punished the wrecking of trading vessels. The towns became more prosperous, and French and German merchants were often seen on the streets of London. He also encouraged the arts of industry, and especially the goldsmiths' art, in which he had himself learned to excel, so that the English goldsmiths became famous for the beautiful work they could do, in making gold ornaments, such as coronets, bracelets and clasps, set with precious gems, and also in making rich gold and silver thread for the embroideries worked by the English ladies. Musical instruments were also more commonly made in England, where they had already a great variety, both of wind and stringed instruments. We are told that Dunstan presented an organ with brass pipes to an abbey church, as a memorial to its founder. Church music was one of the chief branches of learning taught at Canterbury by teachers from Rome, and their pupils became teachers in other parts of England.

The education of the people had not progressed much since the time of Alfred. But Dunstan had been a famous teacher, and he tried to make the monastery more like what the early religious colleges had been. He and his helpers at that time founded some great schools in England, possibly that of Merton in Oxford.

Dunstan also revived the greater part of Alfred's Laws, which contained rules for the good government of the kingdom. Some of these greatly improved the condition of the many slaves in England, who now had some rights given to them. They were no longer obliged to toil on Sundays and holidays, and sometimes they could get a plot of ground of their own and buy

their own freedom through their work. They could also now be tried for wrongs done to each other, like freemen. Wilfrid of York freed two hundred and fifty serfs, or slaves, whom he found belonging to his estate; and people often freed their slaves at their own death. Bishops had to free those reduced to serfdom by want or injustice. Sometimes slaves were set free at the altar, or in the church porch, or where four roads met, and it was forbidden to bring slaves into England.

But the people generally had lost some of their earlier rights and grew more and more subject to the king and his nobles. The king, too, had grown more apart from his subjects, as he was always surrounded by his select band of thanes, who followed him in war, and who gained the chief posts of honour in the kingdom. The old "Witan," or assembly of the wise men, seemed now to have become a royal council, or gathering of the great men about the king. But the people, generally, had lost the voice they used to have in the affairs of the kingdom.

There was almost constant strife between these great men or nobles; and when Edgar died, leaving only boys as his heirs, there was a great dispute, which Dunstan settled by crowning his son Edward, in spite of opposition in the Assembly. Edward was only fifteen when he was crowned, and was an amiable and innocent lad, kind to his little brother Ethelred and to his jealous step-mother Elfrida. One day he went to visit her alone, and after he had mounted his horse to leave, she brought him a cup of wine. While he was drinking it, one of Elfrida's servants came up behind him and stabbed him in the back. The young prince

galloped away, but as he soon became faint from loss of blood, he fell to the ground with his foot in the stirrup, and was dragged by his frightened steed till he was dead. Because of this cruel death, he was called Edward the Martyr, and though the wicked Elfrida built monasteries and practised penances, she was never again much respected by the people.

Ethelred was only ten years old when he began to reign, and came quite under the power of the nobles, who were the enemies of Dunstan. Seeing this, he went away to live quietly at Canterbury, being now archbishop. Ethelred, who was neither brave nor wise, and was nick-named "the Unready," had a very troubled reign, for now the Danes again began to make their savage raids, and the former times of ruin and slaughter seemed to have returned. Ethelred, unable to drive them off, made a bargain with them, by giving them land to settle on, or large sums of money to induce them to go away, and for this purpose he had to put a heavy tax on the kingdom, which was called the *Danegeld* (or Dane-money). He also tried to strengthen his power by marrying Emma, the sister of the Duke of Normandy. And this, in the end, helped to bring about a great change in the history of England.

Another plan, which Ethelred tried, was to employ Danish hired soldiers, as the Saxons were no longer the brave and warlike people they had once been. The Danish soldiers were superior to the Saxons in many ways, but they were often hated for their reckless and disorderly conduct, and sometimes for betraying their masters to their own people. Ethelred began to fear that they would, by and by, kill him and his "wise men," and give up his kingdom to the Danish King

Sweyn, who now ruled both Denmark and Norway, and who had already invaded Britain. To prevent this, he contrived a very foolish and wicked scheme, sending orders through his kingdom that the English people should agree to kill all the Danes, on a Saturday, when they always laid aside their weapons for bathing, of which the Danes as well as the Saxons were very fond. The people were only too ready to carry out this crime, and there was a cruel slaughter. Even Sweyn's sister, Gunhild, who had become a Christian and had married an English earl, was brutally murdered after seeing her husband and children killed before her eyes!

Of course worse trouble followed this wickedness. Sweyn swore that he would take a terrible revenge, and he kept his word. For four years his soldiers distressed England, burning and destroying wherever they went. Then Ethelred paid him a large bribe to go away, which he did—for a time. But fierce Norwegian pirates came next, and still the cruel warfare went on. Canterbury was taken and plundered, and the good Archbishop Alphege was brutally murdered, because he refused to give up the money that belonged to the poor. By and by Sweyn returned stronger than ever, and all the English towns submitted to his rule, while Ethelred took refuge in Normandy.

When Sweyn at last died, Ethelred came back to his kingdom. But he was as cowardly and incapable as ever, while Canute or Cnut, the son of Sweyn, was a strong, bold warrior, determined to keep his hold on England. Ethelred's son, Edmund Ironside, took command of the army, which the king refused to lead, and endeavoured to drive back the Danes, but had to

retreat to London. There he found that his father was dead, and the country in a panic. Queen Emma escaped to Normandy with her two young sons, Alfred and Edward. Edmund Ironside, who was now king, did the best he could for poor distracted England, and but for a traitor named Edric, he might have succeeded better. But he was conquered at a place called Assandun, and was killed soon after, by treason, at Oxford, just after making an agreement to divide the kingdom with Canute.

This Canute, a young man only twenty-one, savage and reckless in character, now seized the whole of England. He sent Edmund's two young sons to Sweden, where he wished the king to put them out of his way by killing them. The Swedish king would not do this, but sent them to the king of Hungary, at whose court they grew up. The elder died, but the younger, Edward, was married to a niece of the Emperor Henry II of Germany. Of his son and daughter, Edgar Atheling and Margaret of Scotland, we shall hear again later.

As we have seen, the reign of Canute was at first harsh and cruel. He despised many of the English nobles for their behaviour to their king, Edmund, and put some of them to death, including the traitor Edric. He is supposed to have been a party to the murder of Edmund Ironside. But his revengeful and passionate nature was greatly changed after he became a Christian, for he grew at last to be a wise and just king. He tried to rule the kingdom well by carrying out the good laws of Edgar, and treating his Danish and English subjects with equal fairness. He divided the country into the four old provinces, Northumbria,

Mercia, East Anglia and Wessex. He paid great respect to the church, but perhaps was too liberal in his gifts to the monasteries, which, in the end, made the monks proud and lazy. He made a pilgrimage to Rome, which, in those days, was thought an act of piety. As he journeyed through Europe he persuaded the princes of the countries on his way to give up the heavy taxes they used to levy on pilgrims. In all these ways, he gained the good will of the people, and carried out what he wrote to his people from Rome. "I have vowed to God to lead a right life in all things, to rule justly and piously my realms and subjects, and to administer just judgment to all."

He married Queen Emma, the widow of Ethelred, and thus made friends with Normandy, and he made an expedition against King Malcolm of Scotland and Cumberland, who refused to pay the tax which was asked for Cumberland. But Malcolm soon yielded to Canute, and agreed that Scotland should always pay a tax for Strathclyde, as that part of the country was then called. During Canute's peaceful reign, trade and prosperity rapidly increased, while his ships guarded the coast from invasion. Some pleasant stories about him have come down to us. One story tells of the pleasure he took in hearing the monks of Ely sing, when his men rowed him along the river Cam, past the monastery which the niece of the Abbess Hilda had built amidst the great fen waters. There still exists the rude old English verse he is said to have made, which, when put into our modern English, reads thus :—

"Merrily sang the monks of Ely
When passed Canute the king ;

Row, knights, close up to land,
And hear we these monks sing ! ”

A finer story is told of something he did when he was living at the sea-port of Southampton, not far from Winchester. As he walked by the sea-shore, near the now busy docks, some of his courtiers began to talk of his great wisdom and power, and declared that he could do anything he would, and that even the waves would obey him. Canute was impatient with this foolish flattery, and ordered his chair to be set on the sands where the tide was coming in. Then as the waves gradually came up, he commanded them to go back. But the tide continued to rise, as it does every day, and when the waves had risen all about him he turned to his courtiers and remarked that all created beings are weak and dependent on the great God Who alone could say to the ocean : “ Thus far shalt thou go, and no farther.” From this we can see how much his character had changed since he had learned to know and love the true God. We know that he had repented of his early crimes, for he said, in the letter already quoted : “ If heretofore I have done aught beyond what was just, through headiness or negligence of youth, I am ready with God’s help to amend it utterly. I have sent this letter, that all the people of my realm may rejoice in my well doing ; for, as you yourselves know, never have I spared nor will I spare to spend myself and my toil in what is needful and good for my people.”

Thus, though Canute’s reign began in strife and bloodshed, it proved, on the whole, a blessing to the English people, who enjoyed, under him, a happy interval of peaceful and prosperous years.

CHAPTER IX

EDWARD THE CONFESSOR AND WESTMINSTER ABBEY

1042-1065

WESTMINSTER ABBEY is the great national shrine of England. There sleep the wise and great men of the past, under noble monuments to their memory ; there all our kings and queens are crowned, and there most of them have been buried. This stately church, whose massive towers rise close to the Parliament Buildings of Westminster, is one of the earliest and grandest old cathedrals of England. Its beginning was the work of Edward the Confessor, the first English king after the Danish line—last but one before the Norman Conquest. His reign is, therefore, a landmark in English history.

Edward the Confessor, a younger son of Ethelred “the Unready” and Queen Emma of Normandy, was chosen king of England after the death of his wicked half-brother Harthacnut, son of Canute. He was, of course, through his mother, half a Norman, and was called “the Confessor” because he had been obliged in youth to escape from England to Normandy ; and having been brought up there, he liked that country and its people much better than England and the English.

He looked like a Saxon, however, for he was exceedingly fair, with a delicate rosy complexion, his flaxen hair being almost white. He was usually gentle and amiable, though subject to sudden fits of passion. He was a much better man than his father, but he was not strong or firm enough to rule England in stormy times. Indeed, he was more fit for a monk than a king, for he loved to spend more of his time in church than in caring for his people and his kingdom. Strange to say, he was also very fond of hunting, and he was very unlike Columba and Cuthbert, who were so kind to dumb animals that they would take shelter beside them; for he liked to chase deer with hounds, and to hunt wild birds by means of tame hawks or falcons. In these cruel sports he spent most of his time, when he was not in church, or busy with church building. He had never been taught the truth contained in the beautiful verse, written long after—

“He prayeth best who loveth best
All things, both great and small,
For the dear God who loveth us
He made and loveth all!”

And, as often happens when people are thoughtless of the sufferings of dumb creatures, Edward could sometimes act cruelly to people also. He once got very angry with a poor peasant, because he would not let him hunt some animal across his field, and swore that he would hurt him when he could. So we cannot call him a “shepherd of his people,” like King Alfred. Before he began to reign, he had been offended with his mother, Queen Emma, because she had not always treated him kindly, nor given him all the money he

wanted; and after he became king, he took away from her nearly everything she possessed, and made her a sort of prisoner at Winchester. He left the care of his kingdom to Earl Godwin, a brave man who had won so much favour from King Canute as a soldier, that he gave him his niece Gytha for his wife. Godwin was a strong, capable, ambitious man, and was always ready to serve Edward in managing public affairs, leaving the king free to do what he liked better.

During the troublous times which followed the reign of Edgar, the learning which Alfred so greatly promoted had been much neglected. Canute's two sons, Harald and Harthacnut, had been great barbarians, and cared nothing for their father's desire to restore the old schools and churches, but plundered and destroyed them. They had been built chiefly of wood, and were easily destroyed by the Danes, who burned down abbeys, churches and houses wherever they went. There were very few stone churches in England in those days, and even the best were low and gloomy, with plain clumsy pillars, very thick walls, and few and small arched windows, screened only by lattice work or linen cloth. Edward repaired the old schools, and encouraged good teachers to come to teach the English boys. An old English writer tells us that when he was a boy at Westminster School, close to Westminster Abbey, he used sometimes to visit his father, who lived at the court of Edward, and that, on these occasions, the fair Queen Edith, who was a daughter of Earl Godwin, used to examine him in his studies. Books in those days were not printed, but only written, and so scarce were they that a fine piece of land was once paid for a single volume.

In some ways Edward hardly seemed to the people an Englishman. He spoke Norman-French instead of English, and put many of his Norman friends into high offices both in Church and state. He followed Norman fashions in his daily life, which did not much please the English people. For these Normans—or “Northmen”—had in former times been the enemies of England, although they had now been so many years in France that they seemed almost French. However, Godwin was too strong to let these strangers exercise much power, and the good government which Canute had begun continued to keep the kingdom in peace. During Edward’s reign, the laws of Alfred and Edgar were set in order and called by his name, so that, in after times, the people would ask for “the good laws of Edward,” as if they had been made by him.

But a great trouble arose, which set the king against Godwin, through the lawlessness of Edward’s Norman friends. A Norman count, named Eustace of Boulogne, came to ask some favour of the king, who was his brother-in-law, and, having got what he wanted, he went, with his troop of Norman followers, to the town of Dover, to embark there for France. As they had to remain there all night, the count sent his men to lodge in the houses of the citizens, without asking their leave. One man, who refused to let a Norman soldier force his way into his house, was wounded by him, and when he struck back in return, he killed the Norman. Immediately a fight began between the count’s men and the citizens, and about twenty were killed in the fray. Count Eustace rode furiously back to London and told his story to the king, who was very angry, and ordered Godwin to take a body of soldiers and go to Dover

to destroy the town. But Earl Godwin felt that this would be to betray the rights of Englishmen, and told the king that he could not do it. This made Edward more angry still, but he could do nothing, at that time, against the earl, who, for his firm stand, was strongly upheld by the people throughout all England.

By and by another difficulty arose. A Norman named Richard, the son of Scrob, had obtained some land from the king, and had built on it a strong castle, which gave him power to ill-treat and oppress the people about him. Godwin and some of the other "Wise Men" met in council (or "Witan"), and at first all stood by Godwin in saying that such things must be put down. But when they afterwards held another meeting in London, they seemed afraid to support Godwin, who was opposed by the king and his Norman friends. Earl Godwin, finding that his life was in danger, at once mounted and rode away with his sons and escaped across the sea. He went with his wife and family to Flanders, where his friend Earl Baldwin protected him till the next year, when he found an opportunity to return to London. There he was received with great joy by the people, who regarded him as their champion. The king had to receive him back into favour, and almost all the troublesome Normans left the kingdom.

But very soon after this happy return in triumph, Earl Godwin was seized with serious illness, and while sitting at dinner with the king on Easter Sunday, he was suddenly struck down, death following soon after. He was buried at Winchester, near his first friend Canute, amidst the grief of the English people, who had regarded him as father and friend.

Edward was, however, more taken up with his church services and his hunting than with the government of England. In Normandy, noble churches were now being built, and the king had much admired the fine cathedral at Rheims. Now he thought that he must build a large church, which should be more worthy of his kingdom than the poor wooden churches of the time. Moreover, he had vowed to make a pilgrimage to Rome ; and as he could not now do this, he thought he must at least build a church.

A little west of what was then the city of London, there was a small " minster " or church, on an island surrounded by marsh and forest, and called the Isle of Thorns. In this little church, dedicated to St. Peter, Edward used sometimes to worship, when he resided at the strong fortress of London, which was afterwards called " The Tower " He resolved to pull down the old ruinous wooden chapel and build an abbey with a fine church, something like those he had seen in Normandy. This church was very different from the present Westminster Abbey, which was built two centuries later, but it was a grand church for that time in England. It was the first English church built in the form of a cross. The foundations were great blocks of grey stone, and the walls strong and solid, and in some places richly sculptured. A large tower rose in the centre, and two smaller ones at the western end, the three containing five bells. The arched windows were filled with stained glass,—then a new thing in England. The roof was supported by substantial oak rafters, and covered with lead. Close about it stood the abbey buildings, the chapter or council house, the refectory, or dining-room, and

the dormitories, or sleeping-rooms. The cloisters or covered walk went round the inner court. Nearly all of this great building has disappeared, but an arch or two, and some of the massive pillars, still remain to show us how grand it once was.

This first abbey was fifteen years in building, and King Edward, who had built for himself, close by, the palace of Westminster, watched its progress anxiously, hoping that it would be finished before he died, for he was now an invalid. He had other cares pressing on his mind, for he had no children, and he was not sure who would be king after him. Earl Godwin had a son named Harold, who was as brave and ambitious and capable as his father. He was called "the under-king," and governed the country well after his father's death. The king liked him much better than his father, and it seemed most likely that he would succeed to the kingdom. In the meantime, he continued to rule, and to help King Edward, in the expectation that the Wise Men and the people would make him king on the death of Edward.

The abbey was at last ready to be solemnly dedicated to the service of God, and King Edward came to keep Christmas at his palace at Westminster, according to his custom. He and other kings after him used to celebrate Christmas, Easter and Whitsuntide at the different places where they resided, generally spending Christmas at Westminster, and Easter at Winchester. At these times they used to wear the crown in great state, as if it were a coronation, and they gathered their great men about them for feasting and rejoicing. On Christmas Day, the king appeared at the banquet, wearing his crown and royal robes ;

but that night his failing strength seemed to give way. He still persisted in attending the banquet, but in a short time he was so much worse, that he wished the dedication to take place at once, lest he should die before it was done.

But the king was not to see his fine church dedicated. Queen Edith presided in his place, with her brothers Harold and Gyrth beside her. The church was consecrated by Archbishop Stigand of Canterbury, who was the last Saxon Primate of England. It was a sad ceremony, in the absence of the king, who had looked forward to it so long! That very evening he seemed to sink into the last stupor, in the "Painted Chamber" at Westminster. But on the third day, he unexpectedly revived, and in wandering sentences he seemed to be foretelling something that was to happen. He said that the "green tree was to be cut off from its trunk, and removed to a distance of three acres," but that it should be returned to its parent stem, and again produce leaves and flowers. This strange dream, floating through the wandering mind of the king, who was troubled about leaving no real heir for his kingdom, was at last supposed to be fulfilled, when, after three reigns, the throne was again filled by a king of partly Saxon race.

When the end came at last, four of his friends were gathered around his bed. The queen sat at his feet, caressing them while she wept. The king spoke calmly of his approaching death and burial, and of his wife's dutiful care, and bade his friends rejoice at his deliverance from earthly troubles. Then he stretched out his hand to Earl Harold, who had been so long his faithful minister and helper, and said, "To thee,

Harold, I commend my kingdom." To him he confided, also, the care of Harold's sister the queen, and also the interests of his Norman favourites, "the men," he said, "who had left their native land for love of him." He asked Harold to protect those who were willing to remain as his subjects, and to send safely to their homes those who might wish to leave the kingdom.

The funeral of King Edward was the first ceremony performed in the newly consecrated church. In his rich royal robes, with his crown on his head, he was laid beneath the high altar. Three times during the succeeding centuries the coffin was opened and the remains recognized. But when, two hundred years after, the abbey was re-built by another king partly of his own race—and in some things very like him—a splendid shrine was built for the royal tomb, where his remains have ever since been left in peace.

CHAPTER X

HAROLD, THE LAST SAXON KING

1065-1066

WE have seen how by courage and wisdom the great Earl Godwin gained his high place in the kingdom, under Edward the Confessor. During the bad times that had followed the death of King Canute, he had remained Earl of the old Wessex, one of the three great provinces into which England was now divided. Northumbria was ruled by a brave Earl named Siward, of whom we shall yet hear more. Mercia's ruler was the good Earl Leofric, and when he died, it was divided between his two sons Edwin and Morcar, of whom, also, we are to hear again. Earl Godwin had been accused of being a party to the death of Prince Alfred, the brother of Edward, when he came to England to visit his mother, Queen Emma. Godwin, however, utterly denied this, and was solemnly acquitted. When the people chose Edward for their king, Godwin, as the chief man in the kingdom, went to Normandy to offer him the crown of his father Ethelred, and when he was crowned at Winchester, Earl Godwin presented him to the people as their king.

He also presented to the King a beautiful ship with a golden figure-head and purple sails richly embroidered in gold.

Earl Godwin had seven sons and three daughters. The eldest, Sweyn, by his headstrong violence, brought much trouble to his family, and died far away from home, while making a pilgrimage as a penitent. Harold, the second son, was very tall and handsome, as well as brave and strong; and though, when young, he did some rash and wrong things, he was a true and brave knight, well fitted to lead the English people in peace or war. He was much more amiable than his next brother Tostig, who was stern, obstinate and often cruel. Of the other brothers we shall hear later. The eldest daughter Edith, who was beautiful and charming, became, as we have seen, the wife of Edward, though she was not called Queen Edith, but rather the "Lady Eadgyth," her Saxon name. Earl Godwin had a large house at Southwark, on the Thames, opposite the king's palace of Westminster. But, as Earl of Wessex, he often lived at Winchester, where he and his son Harold doubtless heard much of the just and merciful rule of the great King Alfred.

We have seen that Edward was much fonder of Normans than of Englishmen, and liked to have them about him as friends and favourites. He appointed a Norman monk, named Robert, to be Bishop of London; and many other Normans soon found their way into high posts about the court. The Normans were proud and haughty, loving splendour, and clearly showing that they despised the plain honest English folk, whose manners were often rude enough; and the English, in their turn, who greatly loved their country

and their freedom, much disliked the bold haughty Normans. We have seen how Earl Godwin stood up for the English, and drove many of the Normans away ; and how, after his death, his son Harold ruled the kingdom in peace and quiet for many years. As the King had no son to succeed him, many of the people, who thought almost as much of Harold as their forefathers had done of Alfred, hoped that he might at last become their king.

But while Earl Godwin and his family had been absent from England, young Duke William of Normandy had come on a visit to his royal cousin. Edward was very glad to see him, and entertained him well. No doubt the King and the Duke talked together about the future, and William afterwards declared that Edward had promised to make him heir to the English throne. William probably did not know that in England the king had to be chosen by the " Witan " or " Wise Men," who represented the people, and would not have cared if he had known. Nothing was said about the matter in public, but we may be sure that William went away fully determined to be some day King of England.

After Harold had made the King feel what a wise ruler he was, and how good a king he would make, Edward forgot his promise to William, if he ever had made one. But he felt that it would be best of all if he could be succeeded by a king of the old royal family, and we must remember that there was still one of that family, named Edmund, living far away, in Hungary. This was the son of Edmund Ironside, and the King sent for him to come to England, with his son and two daughters. He came at once, but he was ill when he

arrived, and died before he could even see Edward. His son Edgar was only a boy, but it was hoped that, before a new king should be needed, he might grow up into a man fit to rule England.

Harold, meanwhile, continued to rule almost as if he had been king. The people loved him more and more, and their bards sang his praises in words like these: "He, in all time, by words and deeds, truly obeyed his lord, and left naught undone which it was needful for the ruler of his people." He was a great warrior as well as a great ruler, and put an end to the outbreaks of the Welsh Britons under their King Gruffyd, as well as to troubles that arose through the misconduct of his brother Tostig, now Earl of Northumbria. Tostig had been much away from his province, and when he was there, he was very harsh and cruel. At last the people, who were of Danish race, declared that they would not have him for a ruler, and Harold, seeing that his brother was in the wrong, had to agree to his being banished from England. This event made great trouble between the two brothers, and, in the end, wrought much harm to Harold and the English people.

The kingdom, however, was at peace during most of Harold's rule, and as he wished to see something of other countries, and how they were governed, he went on a pilgrimage across Europe to Rome. On his return, he brought with him many beautiful things, the best of which he placed in a fine church which he built at Waltham, in his earldom, to which he appointed twelve preachers. He used to watch its progress as Edward watched that of his abbey, and when it was finished he got his friend Wulfstan, the good Bishop of Worcester,

to consecrate it. At this time the Bishop told Harold he saw so much wickedness in England that he felt sure that the people would have to suffer God's judgment for their sins. It was not long before the Bishop's words came true.

Some time after Harold returned from his pilgrimage, he was cruising in the English Channel with some of his family, when he was shipwrecked on the coast of France. A fisherman found out who he was, and told the lord of that country, who kept him a prisoner, hoping for a ransom. Duke William heard of this, and sent some of his men to bring him to Rouen, where he lived. He treated him and his friends very generously, entertaining them well, and taking Harold with him on one of his fighting expeditions. As they had to pass along the sea-shore, some of William's men were once nearly lost in a quicksand, when Harold rescued them by his great strength. After Harold had been his guest for some time, William told him privately that Edward had promised him the kingdom of England, and insisted that Harold should promise to help to make him king. Harold was very unwilling to do this, but he saw that William would keep him there until he did what he wished, so at last he agreed to swear to the promise that William asked. Afterwards he knew that he had done wrong in giving a promise which it would be wrong for him to keep. This must have weighed much upon his mind, and was the means of great calamity both to himself and to England.

When Edward, before he died, commended his kingdom to Harold, the latter knew that no time was to be lost in claiming it. On the same day on which Edward was buried in the new Abbey, Harold was crowned

there by Bishop Aldred of York, with little pomp or splendour. He knew how angry Duke William would be when he should hear it, and indeed his rage was so great that no one dared speak to him for some time. Harold knew that he must be prepared for war, and sent his good ships to cruise by the Isle of Wight. He waited there all summer with his army, always expecting to see William's ships appearing from the south. But the summer passed by, and still they did not come, for William had much to do first. He did not mean to make war on England till he could bring an army large enough to conquer it, so he called together all his Norman nobles, and asked other rulers to help him to take the crown of England, and punish Harold for breaking his promise. In the meantime, Harold's army grew weary of waiting so long, and, as harvest-time drew near, he felt that he must let his men go home to get in their grain.

But another danger was threatening him and England from the North. His brother Tostig, angry at losing his earldom, had made friends with the King of Norway, a fierce giant named Harold Hardrada, who brought a great force to Northumbria and sailed up the Humber. The two Earls, Edwin and Morcar, were unable to defend their coasts; and messengers soon came to the English King to tell him that the invading army was ravaging the land at their pleasure. Harold could not hesitate. He, with his two brothers, must go at once with his army to save the North. So, with such a force as he could collect of his trained soldiers, who were called "house-carles," and of volunteers ready to fight for their country, he set out on his hasty march along the great Roman road from London to

the North, which had been travelled, long before, by so many soldiers' feet.

Meanwhile, the invading army thought themselves quite secure, and the Northmen were going forth unarmed to a great assembly that the Danish King was to hold in the city of York, which had already surrendered. Suddenly they saw a cloud of dust in the distance, through which gleamed the shields and spears and prancing steeds of an advancing army. Tostig began to shrink from meeting his brother on the field. Knowing himself to be a traitor to his country and his father's house, he begged his friends to delay fighting till they could be more prepared. But Harold Hardrada would have no delay. He sent messengers to bring all the men from the ships and hastily marshalled his army for battle. His men surrounded the raven standard (or flag) with their locked shields, amid a thick forest of spears, awaiting the English charge. The English King, as he approached, asked, "Who is the tall man who fell from his horse—the man with the blue kirtle and the goodly helm?" "It is King Harold of Norway," was the reply; and the King remarked that, "Tall and goodly as he is, his luck has left him!"

The fight was a long and terrible one. Both sides fought desperately, and the giant King rushed to and fro, wielding his sword like another Goliath, and hewing down many a gallant thane or house-carle. At last he fell, pierced through the throat, and his followers fell thickly about him where he lay. There was a short pause in the fight, and Tostig took the dead King's place by the standard. Harold seized the occasion to make a new offer of peace to his brother, and

quarter to the Northmen. But a fierce and vengeful shout from the army was the answer, and again the bloody combat went on, till the traitor Tostig fell. Still the battle raged, as the men from the ships came up, and the English were nearly driven back. But the Northmen seemed to feel that it was a losing game and were seized with a strange madness. Some threw away their armour, some fell exhausted, and died without a wound. When the dusk came down, the chief men of Norway lay dead on the field, and those who were left escaped in the darkness.

The English Harold was always merciful to a fallen foe. In four and twenty ships, the remnant of the Norwegian army sailed away to Norway, to harass England no more. Harold, grieved to the heart by the death of so many trusty knights, as well as of his traitor brother, was obliged to give his army a few days' rest, while he tried to settle the affairs of the ravaged country. But even while he was at the banquet at which, according to custom, the victory was celebrated, a breathless messenger appeared, who had spurred his horse from distant Sussex, to bring him direful news. Three days after the battle he had just fought, at Stamford Bridge, William of Normandy, at the head of a great army, had landed on the undefended shore of Kent, at Pevensey, near where Cæsar had landed, eleven hundred years before.

It is needless to say that King Harold hurried south with his army, as soon as he heard that William of Normandy had landed on English soil. His gallant brother Gyrth tried to persuade him to leave the fighting to him, because if he were killed, Harold would still be left. Since the King would not do this, Gyrth urged

him to ravage the country between him and William, in order to cut off his supplies of food. But Harold at once refused, in noble words: "Never will I burn an English village or an English house. Never will I harm the lands or the goods of any Englishman. How can I do hurt to the folk who were put under me to govern? How can I plunder and harass those whom I would fain see thrive under my rule?" The Norman William was even then ravaging the lands about him, as he invaded the country. But the English Harold would not harm his country or his people, to save his throne or his life!

No one who loves the English race or the English tongue, or the true spirit of the British Empire, can read without a sad heart the story of the Battle of Hastings. For there, or rather on the tragic heights of Senlac—at one blow—the hopes and liberties and happiness of England were lost for many miserable years. The golden dragon of Alfred and the West Saxons waved over the English ranks, fronting the leopards of Normandy, which were no unfit emblem of what was to come. Harold of England and the West Saxons stood beside his royal standard of the "Fighting Man," at the head of the bravest of the English nobles and his faithful house-carles, against the boldest of living warriors, surrounded by the war-like leaders of Normandy and France. All were anxious to get a share of English spoils, and eager for the long-looked-for battle.

Harold had built a wall of palisades round the front of the heights of Senlac, to make his position strong. By his orders, the Englishmen stood firm behind it, and, with their shields locked together, they fought

bravely all day against the fierce onset of the Normans. For hours they stood immovable behind their "shield-wall," and drove back, with their axes and javelins, the war-clubs and swords of the Normans, while the arrows of the skilful marksmen rained fiercely down on them. King Harold fought on foot, side by side with his two brothers and many a gallant comrade. His brother Gyrth unhorsed William himself, and was at once slain by a Norman spear, while the younger, Leofwine, shared his fate a few minutes later. Still Harold, undaunted, fought on, and might have been victor of the day. But unhappily some of his untrained troops, against his orders, broke the "shield-wall," to pursue the Normans they had put to flight.

This was the beginning of the end. For a time the issue was still doubtful, for about Harold and the "Fighting Man" the English ranks were yet unbroken. At last, William, seeing that the arrows of his bowmen had no effect on the locked shields of the English, ordered his men to shoot straight into the air, so that the arrows might come down on the heads of the English. They soon did their deadly work, and one arrow pierced the eye of Harold. He tried to tear it out, but the shaft broke, and he fell helpless to the ground, where he was soon despatched by four Norman warriors.

Harold's followers fought on till the twilight came down on the bloody field, but his death decided the fortunes of the day and the fate of England for many years to come. That fourteenth of October, 1066, is one of the great landmarks of English history. It has been well said that for any other so important, we should have to go back to the day when the first

Englishman received Christian baptism, or to the day when the first Englishmen (or Engles) set foot on the shores of Britain. For out of the issues of that day were at last to arise—through much pain and anguish—new life and light for the English people.

CHAPTER XI

HEREWARD THE WAKE

1066-1071

KING HAROLD slept peacefully under the cairn or pile of stones by the sea, raised by a gallant Norman, William Malet ; but the kingdom of England, like a flock left without a shepherd, fell a helpless prey to its conqueror. The land of Kent, ravaged and burned, showed how William would treat all who opposed his will ; and, wherever he took his ruthless troops, the terrified people hardly dared to resist.

Such of the nobles as were left, did, indeed, hold a great meeting or " Witan " in London ; and chose young Edgar Atheling for their king. But they had no strong leader, and they feared lest London itself should be destroyed and burned, if it should hold out against William. After a short time of hesitation, a number of the chief men and bishops, headed by young Edgar Atheling himself, went to offer to William the crown of England. This offer the Conqueror accepted as the choice of the nation, making many fair promises to rule the kingdom well.

During the years that followed, the English people learned too well what it meant to be ruled by strangers and foreigners, who cared nothing for English rights

and liberties. Even at the coronation of William, on Christmas day, in Westminster Abbey, where so lately Edward the Confessor had been buried, and Harold had been crowned, they had an example of Norman brutality. According to their old custom, the people, crowded within the Abbey, were asked if they would that William should be King of England, and when they shouted "Yea, yea, King William!" the noise startled the Norman horsemen on guard outside. These took it for an outbreak against William, and forthwith began to set fire to the gates of the Abbey, and the houses clustered round it, as they used to do to the places they attacked. The crowd in the Abbey saw the glare of the flames, and rushed out in alarm, leaving the King alone with the bishops and the monks. It is said that, for once in his life, William trembled with fear; but he went on to take the English oath "to do justice and mercy, to all within his realm," and a new crown, set with gleaming gems, was placed on his head.

William was as yet King of England only in name, for the southern portion alone had as yet submitted to him. He was determined, however, to rule all England, and what he determined, he was bound to carry out at any cost. He had brought many Normans and Frenchmen into England to help him to conquer it, and he had promised to reward them with English lands and other spoils; and as nearly all the nobles and fighting thanes of the south had died with Harold in the Battle of Hastings, he bestowed their manors and houses on his followers, who at once took possession, with little regard for the widows and children who were turned out. Harold's own large estates William

took for himself, and kept fourteen hundred manors for his royal use. He also began building castles in the towns he had subdued, as strongholds from which his men could keep the people under subjection. It took a long time to settle all these matters, and meantime the new King wished to return for a while to his old Duchy, where he had left his wife, Matilda, whom he dearly loved. Leaving his brother, Bishop Odo, and one of his Norman captains, William Fitz-Osborn, to govern for him in his absence, he set out for Normandy, six months after his landing at Pevensey. He took with him a great following, and among them some English lords whom he was afraid to leave at home. Among these was Edgar Atheling, whom William liked to consider a sort of cousin, and wished to make a friend. There, too, was the brave and handsome young Earl Waltheof, son of Siward of Northumbria, whose fate was to be a sad one. There, also, were the young northern Earls, Edwin and Morcar, Harold's brothers-in-law, who had failed to help him against William. There, too, was the good Archbishop Aldred of York, and Stigand—not long to remain Archbishop of Canterbury. And the King took with him so great a store of precious treasures of gold and silver cups and flagons and ornaments, as well as of wonderful English embroideries, for presents to his friends and the churches of Normandy, that the people marvelled to see such things brought from a country which they had long despised as “barbarous.”

But meantime, the free-born English people who had so long enjoyed peace and good laws, found themselves oppressed, ill-treated and insulted in a thousand ways, by the haughty and heartless Normans. The

English were not men who could tamely submit to lawless tyranny, and it was not long before news of sharp conflicts called William back from the flattering applause he was enjoying in his own Normandy.

Then again began the old dismal round of fighting, slaughter and ravage, over some of the fairest and richest portions of England. But out of these troubles came an event which brought much good to the northern kingdom of Scotland, and became the first link in uniting the two countries. One enterprise after another was risked in the north and west. One of these was headed by Edgar Atheling, who took refuge in Scotland when it failed, and another was led by the three sons of Harold, bringing a force from Ireland, as their father had once done to assist the return of Godwin. But the Conqueror's power crushed one and all, as he brought the country, bit by bit, under his own dominion; while the greater part of Northern England became a wilderness, from which peaceful life seemed for the time crushed out.

In bright contrast to the servile flattery of William's selfish courtiers, there was one Norman monk, named Wimund, who—when William offered him a rich bishopric or abbey—dared sternly to rebuke the King for his reckless and savage career of conquest. He told William plainly that “God hates robbery for burnt-offering, and will not accept the oppression of the poor.” He asked him with what face he could try to rule men whose friends and kinsmen he had slain, robbed or driven away, or had condemned to prison or to slavery. He spoke of England lying before him as one vast spoil, from which he himself shrank as from a burning fire, and he warned the King and his friends

to think of the judgment to come. William's friends were angry with the brave monk, but the King knew in his heart that he was right. So Wimund went to his Norman monastery, there to strive, as he had said, "after the reward Christ had promised to the 'poor in spirit.'" In like manner, one honest Norman noble refused to take a rood of English land taken by force from its owners, and went back peacefully to rule his own people at home.

At last, in the North, there appeared an English hero, whose heart was strong when all others quailed, and who defended the last shelter of English freedom in a brave though hopeless struggle. This was the famous "Hereward the Wake," born and reared in an ancient manor-house in the beautiful fen-country of the Dane-lagh, as part of Northumbria was called, a land of pastures and streams, of orchards, gardens and deep forests, "painted with flowers in the spring," with "pleasant shores embosomed in still lakes," as an old English writer describes it.

There are many wonderful stories told of Hereward the Wake, said to have come from an ancient family belonging to the fen-country of Lincolnshire. We do not know just why he was called "the Wake," but the famous English writer, Charles Kingsley, has described him and his exploits in a thrilling tale which describes how he grew up a strong, brave lad, whom these rough fighting times had taught to love fighting. He gathered a band of wild boys like himself to follow him, just as his father and other thanes had bands of men about them whom they called "house-carles" or men-at-arms, but whom we should call guards. He and his comrades got into trouble, partly because Here-

ward could not bear to see the unjust and wicked deeds done by men in power, and for some violent acts he was outlawed, so that he had to escape for his life.

After wandering through several countries, we are told that he came at last to Flanders just across the Channel. There he heard all the sad news from England, of Harold's defeat and death, of the cruel oppression of William and his overbearing Normans ; and of the wrongs of his own mother, driven from her home by one of William's rough serving-men, who treated the poor people like slaves.

Brave Hereward, knowing such things, could not remain in a foreign country while it seemed that England needed all her brave sons to help her. But he was at a loss what to do, for the English had had no real leader since King Harold fell at Senlac. At last he heard that one part of the people were plotting to make Edgar Atheling King of the North, with help from Malcolm of Scotland, and that another part had sent messengers to ask Sweyn, King of Denmark, to come to their aid, and even to become their king. They were ready to welcome any deliverer from the hated Norman yoke.

Hereward found his way back to the Fen-land, taking with him a band of well-trained followers, or men-at-arms. With a strong hand he got back his old home, and drove away the strangers. The Danes, who had gained some great successes along with the English, under the great Earl Waltheof, and had even taken the city of York from the Normans, were still in their fleet, hovering about the eastern coast. Hereward made an alliance with them, and even helped them

to plunder and burn the great, rich monastery of Peterborough, which, for its wealth, was called the "Golden Borough." Hereward's own uncle had been its abbot, and now one of the hated and cruel strangers was on his way, at the head of one hundred and fifty-eight men, to rule in his place. The rich plunder of the monastery was carried off by the Danes, but they did not carry it all the way to Denmark. For being driven, by stress of weather, to land at an English town, they placed their booty in a church for safety. Unfortunately for them, the watchman was drunk, that night, and the church was burnt down, with all the treasures it contained.

Hereward, since he could not keep the Danes to help him, and knew that the Normans would soon come down on him in force, took refuge in the monastery of Ely. Its abbot, Thurstan, a true Englishman, hated the heavy Norman yoke, and sheltered the band of outlaws who were so bravely fighting against it. Thither, hearing of their prowess, came some of the great leaders of English freedom who were still left, and whom William called "rebels." Edgar Atheling was in Scotland, and Earl Edwin had by this time been basely murdered, but his brother Morcar escaped from William's hold and came to the "Camp of Refuge" at Ely. So also did Ethelwin, Bishop of Durham, from his Scottish shelter, and many another true English knight. All kept watch and ward against surprise, and as soldiers and monks sat at table in the great refectory of the Minster, their weapons of war were hung from roof and wall, so that in case of need, all could spring to arms at a moment's notice. Just so the men of Nehemiah carried their weapons while

they rebuilt the walls of Jerusalem ; but it was a harder task to try to rebuild ruined England.

Of course William was determined to subdue the "rebels," but Hereward and his men led his troops and his sailors a long chase through the marshes of the Fens, and fought many a fierce fight before that was accomplished. More than once he repulsed, with great loss, their attempts to cross to the island by a bridge they had made, and more than once he is said to have made his way in disguise into the King's camp at Cambridge to find out their strength. But the odds were too great. Morcar and his comrades began to feel their hearts fail when they saw themselves surrounded by the King's ships as well as his troops. Partly through fair promises of William, and partly through the treachery of the timid monks, Morcar gave himself up to William and remained a prisoner in Normandy till the death of the King, while most of the others also fell into the hands of the Conqueror, who dealt with them after his usual fashion.

But Hereward and a few of his men still kept their liberty. King William, with all his faults, was always a brave man and admired courage in others ; and was very anxious to take Hereward alive, and bring him into his own service. But Hereward loved the life of a "freebooter" too well, and, like Robin Hood, he sought shelter in the forest, "under the greenwood tree," where many such lurked, long after the Norman Conquest. There, with the help of the poor farmers around him, who were devoted to their hero, he remained for a time, the terror of the Normans, and the forlorn hope of the English. Nine counties, we are told, felt the strength of his avenging arm.

At last, even Hereward was compelled to give up the vain struggle, and submit to the King, who seems to have restored his lands, and to have taken him with him to help him on an expedition against Scotland. As he had fought with many foes, so now many were watching for an opportunity to take his life. He knew this, and kept his men constantly on guard, even though he was no longer an outlaw. But one day his sentry slumbered at his post, and a band of armed men burst in, taking him by surprise. He is said to have killed fifteen with his own arm, but at last he was wounded in the back, and fell, dragging one of his assailants to death with him. So ended the last heroic attempt of that age to save the liberties of England, where—as sang a Danish minstrel—

“Cold heart and bloody hand
Now ruled English land !”

But distracted and divided England was now at last, for the first time, brought under the actual sway of one strong ruler. The Saxons had not been easy to rule, for they loved freedom more than obedience, and both are necessary for the well-being of a nation. And out of all the oppression and evil of these troublous times, there was to rise, in the end, a strong, united, law-abiding Britain, destined, in the Providence of God, to become the centre and force of a great, world-wide Empire.

CHAPTER XII

QUEEN MARGARET OF SCOTLAND

.1067-1093

WE have seen in the last chapter how Edgar Atheling headed a Northern revolt against William, and afterwards took refuge in the kingdom of Scotland. In the time of Columba, this kingdom had two kings in it, the King of the Scots in the west, and the King of the Picts in the east. These last were so numerous then, that, for a long time, the country was called Pict-land. When Egfrid of Northumbria was defeated, in the time of Oswald, by the Picts, they pushed their way in all directions. But not long after this, the King of the Picts died without children, and the King of the Scots, who was his kinsman, became King of Scotland, as the country now began to be called.

When the Danes came and ravaged North Britain, as well as England, the Picts and Scots grew into one people. The English kings were glad to have a barrier to the North to protect them from the Danes, who had taken possession of the Orkney Isles. And when the Scottish kings needed help, they were willing to take it from the English king. The southern part of Scotland and the northern part of England were then

called Strathclyde on the west, and Northumbria on the east, and a large part of that country was ruled by the Scottish kings on condition that they should regard the English kings as "over-lords" of that part of their dominion. But this made frequent disputes between the Scottish and English kings, and there were many raids (or rides for plunder) in consequence. Malcolm Canmore (or Great-Head) reigned over Scotland at this time, and several times came over to ravage the English earldom of Northumbria.

The young prince, Edgar Atheling, being no longer safe in England, set out with his mother and two sisters, Margaret and Christina, and a train of followers, to find a refuge elsewhere. They set sail from England to go to Hungary, but were driven by contrary winds into the Firth (or bay) of Forth. There they found a safe shelter between the shore where towers the rock of Edinburgh on one hand and that where lay the King's palace of Dunfermline on the other. Their big ship astonished the rude fisher-folk, and King Malcolm, hearing of their arrival, sent some of his wise men to find out who the strangers were. They returned to tell him of the noble and splendid appearance of the little party, and especially of the beauty and lively, pleasant talk of the fair Princess Margaret.

Malcolm Canmore was the son of the King Duncan who was murdered by Macbeth, as you may read in Shakespeare's great play. At that time, he had taken shelter with the strong Earl Siward of Northumbria, who had helped him to avenge King Duncan's murder, and he had no doubt heard of Edgar Atheling and his father Edward. The Atheling party had brought with them many beautiful and precious things, such

as rich tapestries (or embroidered hangings) and golden vessels and jewels, which the Emperor Henry II had given to their father to take to England. But their best treasure was the beautiful Princess Margaret, who was stately as well as charming in her royal attire. King Malcolm, who was then a widower, had never seen so fair and sweet a lady, and he soon loved her greatly, and begged that she might become his wife. Margaret was at first very unwilling to think of such a marriage, as she was very good and kind, and the King was a rough, fierce, careless warrior. She would have greatly preferred to live in some quiet convent, but the King was very urgent, and her brother Edgar was anxious that she should marry him. So at last she consented, thinking that God might have some work for her to do in Scotland; and after a time she was brought, as a bride, amid great rejoicing, to the old grey palace of Dunfermline.

Margaret was a good and noble queen, seeking to soften the rough, rude ways of the people about her, with a grace and dignity and goodness, which, perhaps, she partly inherited from her forefather Alfred. At any rate, her character seems to have resembled his, for we are told of her by one who knew her well, that "her life was full of moderation and gentleness, her speech contained the very salt of wisdom, and even her silence was full of good thoughts."

The palace of Dunfermline was set in the middle of a dense forest, amid rocky heights and green dells. It was very plain and bare, but she soon did much to make it a pleasanter abode. She had a sort of work-room for making embroidery and tapestry, in which the women of England were so skilful. Perhaps, at that

very time, the ladies of Queen Matilda of England were working the wonderful "Bayeux tapestry" which has preserved such curious picture-stories of the Norman Conquest. But she had other cares more important. As she was a devout Christian, and wished that her people should be well taught, she persuaded her husband, the King, to build a great church, still called Dunfermline Abbey, whose massive ruined arches and columns even yet show the noble beauty of its past. Her chaplain Theodoric, like many monks of the time, was skilled in the useful arts (or industries) that she wished to have practised in her new kingdom, and he willingly helped her by teaching the workmen how to fashion and adorn the beautiful things which the Queen delighted to prepare for her new church. She also liked to beautify the plain bare halls of the sombre palace, where the rough and war-like nobles were wont to meet. And for this purpose she used the rich hangings she had brought with her in the ship, or others which her ladies embroidered. No doubt she herself often worked at these, as she sat by the narrow windows, looking out into the forest, in the midst of which was rising the new white abbey. Its stately Norman arches were very different from the rude oaken walls of Columba's little church in Iona, but it was to be devoted to the same great end.

Queen Margaret was a good scholar for that age, and the King, who never learned even to read, greatly admired the learning of his charming wife. He grew to love the Book of Psalms with its painted borders, from which the Queen seemed to draw so much comfort and help. One written roll of parchment which he saw she especially esteemed, he sent to be encased in gold, stud-

ded with jewels, and brought it back to her as his gift. She well deserved his affection, for she was anxious to do all she could for his good, and that of his kingdom. She thought the King was not enough respected by his rough nobles, so she taught them some of the respectful usages which she had seen elsewhere, and, with the treasures she possessed, she made the palace a more fitting abode for the King of Scotland. By and by more of such things found their way into the country; and its trade, which had been very small, began greatly to increase. As a large part of Northern England had been laid waste, and towns and villages burnt by William, many English families came over to live in the south of Scotland, to escape from famine and death. Thus that part of it became almost as English as Wessex had been, and the people continued to speak English there, when French was spoken in many other places. The English tongue was therefore preserved there much better than in many parts of England, so that what is called the "Scotch" tongue of to-day is more like the old English of early times than that generally called "English."

Queen Margaret's gentle influence came to be strongly felt by those about her, and by degrees the rough soldiers grew less violent and more orderly. She took a great interest in the Culdee ministers or monks, who kept up the teaching of Columba, and she talked with them about some points in which their observances differed from her own. The King, who spoke both Saxon and Gaelic, explained to them what she said, and her chaplain Theodoric also assisted her. She loved to help the poor, who used to crowd about her as if they were her children, and she brought many

comforts into the life of the people, which they had not known before. As the Scottish King had brought home many English captives from the raids he used to make into Northumbria, she took a great interest in those who were in the palace, and also in defending and protecting all she heard about—sometimes even paying their ransom and setting them free. In these ways and many others the King and Queen worked together for the good order and improvement of what had been a wild and barbarous kingdom.

Queen Margaret was very kind to her brother Edgar Atheling, and when he wished to go on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, she fitted out his expedition with much treasure and many comforts. The party were, however, shipwrecked, and had to return home, when the King and Queen again fitted them out for their voyage. St. Andrews, on the other side of the Firth of Tay, had long been one of the sacred places in Scotland, even before its old cathedral was built. As pilgrims often wished to go thither, the Queen provided safe boats to take them across the stormy Firth which lay between Fife and the "Lothians," as the southern part of the country began to be called. Queen Margaret not only provided boats, but also guest-houses to shelter the travellers, at the place of crossing—ever since called Queensferry.

The King and Queen did not always reside at Dunfermline, but frequently lived for a time in the grey castle of Edinburgh, which is said to have been set on its high rocky perch by the good King Edwin, and to have taken its name from him. There, too, the Queen's sincere faith and warm piety have left their mark. There still stands, on the highest part of the

Castle-rock, a small stone building called St. Margaret's Chapel. It is as plain and bare as a barn, and its only distinguishing mark is the dark chancel arch, But in it she kept the black cross, or "Holy Rood," she had brought with her, and there she loved to gather her little household for the worship and prayers which were so great a comfort and help to herself. The King and Queen had a large family of seven sons and three daughters, who were carefully brought up by their mother in her own devout faith.

This happy royal home had been a blessing to Scotland for twenty-three years, when a sad event happened to change everything. Margaret had, it is said, greatly weakened her health and constitution by her long fasts and constant labours. She was failing rapidly, when her husband and eldest son, much to her sorrow and against her earnest pleadings, went on a war-like expedition into England. Malcolm had a quarrel with William Rufus, son of William the Conqueror, because that King had not kept promises he had made to him, On former occasions of this kind he had been victorious, but this time he was beaten, and he and his eldest son Edward fell on the fatal field. The second son, Ethelred, escaped, and carried the sad tidings to his mother, who was now on her dying bed. The rumour of her husband's death had been too much for her, and she had been prostrated by the first news; but, on the fourth day after she heard it, she rose from her bed and went to her little chapel to receive the Holy Sacrament. When she returned, death seemed already written on her face, and while she seemed lost in prayer, her son arrived with his sad tidings. At first he could not tell her the fatal truth, but she

entreated him to tell her all. Then, with one cry of thanksgiving to God, she passed peacefully away.

There was a sad task before young Ethelred and the sorrowing family. King Malcolm had a strong, ambitious brother named Donalbain, who was determined to be king. And now that Malcolm and his eldest son were both dead, this prince lost no time in assembling a band of armed men to take the castle. As the rock on which it stood was very steep on all sides but one, the besiegers did not watch its rugged sides, for they seemed to think that no one would try to escape by that way. But young Prince Ethelred and his counsellors thought they must try it, and managed to carry down the Queen's bier, bringing also her younger children. They all got down the rocks unseen, and a thick mist which rose from the sea hid the little party from view, so that they got safely across the Firth to Dunfermline, where, for the present, they were safe among their friends. The Abbey which Queen Margaret had built there was the last resting-place of the good Queen and her war-like husband.

When the Queen had parted with her chaplain, not very long before her death, she spoke to him, with tears, of coming trouble. As she bade him farewell, she said, "Remember my soul in your prayers and take care of my children; cease not to teach and admonish them, especially when they are raised to great estate." Nearly all the children who survived her were raised to "great estate," and, like her, feared God and sought the good of those they ruled. One of her daughters, Edith or Matilda, as we shall hear in another chapter, brought back to England the good stock of the Saxon royal race. One of her granddaughters was

also a Queen of England and another was Empress of Germany. Of her seven sons, Ethelred and another son died young ; but Edgar, Alexander and David all became in turn kings of Scotland, and lived in friendship with their cousins the English kings ; so that the border warfare so long waged between the two kingdoms almost ceased. But when her own family line came to an end, there followed a very sad period for Scotland which brought much misery to both kingdoms. Five hundred years later, however, England and Scotland were at last happily united under a king who, like all our succeeding sovereigns after Henry I, was descended from the good Queen Margaret.

CHAPTER XIII

THE DEATH OF WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR

1066-1087

TWENTY-ONE years had passed over the head of King William since he had fought and conquered the last Saxon king. They had been years of almost constant fighting at home and abroad. Perhaps he had sometimes been forced to feel that he would have been happier if he had left England alone and been content to rule his own Duchy. As he grew older and less able to bear trouble, home troubles, the worst of all, had crowded thickly upon him.

It had not been an easy task for even William the Conqueror to rule two countries, and he was often long separated from his Queen Matilda and their children, who lived chiefly in Normandy. While he was busy in England, putting down disturbances and revolts, his boys had been too little under their father's eye. And as they had grown into men, he had given them high offices to fulfil, but kept them quite dependent upon himself.

Perhaps he saw that his eldest son Robert was very unfit to be trusted with power, and could never make a good King of England, for he declared that he should

be only Duke of Normandy, after his own death. But Robert was proud and ambitious, and asked his father to make him Duke at once. For, like the prodigal son, he wanted to get his portion at once, and scorned his father's bidding—"Be obedient to me in all things, and share my dominions everywhere with me." Before long he quarrelled with his father and brothers, and tried to seize the ducal castle at Rouen. Failing in this, he collected a band of wild young comrades and wandered about France, from the court of one noble to another, living an idle, riotous life, on such loans as he could procure. William would do nothing for his undutiful son, but the kind and loving Matilda could not bear, as she said, "to enjoy wealth while her son was lacking all things," so she sent him a large quantity of money and treasure, and braved for the first time the anger of her husband, in order to help her undeserving son.

Worse still was to come. King Philip of France gave Robert a castle close to the borders of Normandy, in which he collected many fighting men. William himself went to besiege it, and there received his first wound in battle, at the hand of his own son. His younger son, William, was also wounded, and for once, the King and his men had to retreat before the rebels. After this, some of the Norman leaders succeeded in making peace between William and his son, to whom he again promised that he should be Duke of Normandy, on condition of his future obedience.

Shortly after Robert's rebellion, other great sorrows came upon the King. The beautiful "New Forest" of Hampshire was first made a hunting-ground by William, and historians have told us that he destroyed

many villages and churches to make it a wilderness. This is now thought to have been greatly exaggerated, but he certainly enforced very harsh laws and severe punishments upon any who should disturb or kill the deer that he wished to keep for his own hunting. And it was said to be a fatal place for his family, for his second son Richard was killed there by a falling branch, and his successor, Rufus, was shot there by a chance arrow. One of his daughters, too, died, it was said, because her father refused to let her marry the man she loved and made her marry one she hated. Then had come the greatest sorrow of all, the illness and death of the lovely and good Queen Matilda, who was kind and bountiful to all, and was tenderly loved by her husband. He built her a stately tomb in a monastery at Cæen, which she had herself founded ; and then he had turned back to his work as a ruler of two kingdoms.

There were disturbances in Normandy to quell, and when that was done, there were troubles in Northumbria to settle. Moreover, the King found, on his return to England, that his brother, Bishop Odo, to whom he had again entrusted the government, during his stay in Normandy, had ruled as a tyrant, pursuing his own ambitious schemes, for he hoped some day to become Pope at Rome.

King William called a great meeting of his chief men, and asked them how he should deal with his brother's misconduct. But no one dared to reply. He bade his barons arrest Odo, but no one would venture to lay hands on a bishop. Paying no heed to Odo's anger, William himself arrested his brother, saying, "I do not seize the Bishop of Bayeux, but I do seize

the Earl of Kent, and demand from him an account of the stewardship which I committed to him." And this "unjust steward" remained in prison till the day of William's death.

England had suffered much that year, first from famine, and then from a heavy tax which the King laid upon the land. But still worse things threatened it. A Danish invasion, with a thousand ships, was preparing to attack it. William was in Normandy when he heard this news, but he once more crossed over to England, at the head of a vast host, this time to defend it from foreign foes. And then, to the great distress of the English, he did what Harold had refused to do for life and crown; he caused all the land along the sea-coast to be laid waste, so that if the foe should land, he might find neither food nor help. But a mutiny broke out among the Danes, and the foe never appeared. One thing more remained for King William to do, before he left England for the last time. Having set a tax on the land, he had a great and exact survey made of all the possessions of the people, and everything was set down in a great book called "Domesday Book," still in existence. The writer of this year in the old *Chronicle* says that "so narrowly did he cause the survey to be made, that there was not an ox, nor a cow, nor a pig, passed by, that was not set down in these accounts." This caused ill-will and sometimes disturbances, and not a few lives were lost in the course of the great Survey. When it was at last finished, the King called a great assemblage together on Salisbury plain, and proclaimed a law, that every freeman in the kingdom must take the oath of obedience to him, to serve and defend him faithfully, which was done by all

of the great assemblage. Perhaps it was about the same time that he ordained the ringing of the curfew bell at eight o'clock in the evening, when all the people were expected to put out their fires and remain in their houses, thus preventing nightly disturbances and danger of fire. But the people did not like to be deprived of their cosy firesides in the long winter evenings.

That year, too, had been one of much suffering in England. Storms had destroyed the crops, and the plague raged in the land. St. Paul's Church in London and other churches had been burned down. Multitudes in England died of sickness or hunger. But the King was then in Normandy, leading his men for the last time on a raid of wicked havoc over a peaceful, undefended country. There had been a quarrel between him and Philip of France, about the frontier land of Normandy, where William wished to seize a whole province, and to revenge himself on Philip for a grudge he had against him. In August, when the fields were golden for harvest, the orchards rosy with apples, and the ripe grapes were hanging on the vines, the stern King went forth on his savage errand. He ravaged the country and slew its defenders ; and laid in ashes the stately church and beautiful town of Mantes, in which perished many a peaceful French subject.

But here William's stormy career was at last arrested in the very act of this great wickedness. While he was urging on his troops to heap up fuel and make the town burn faster, his horse stumbled among the burning embers, and the King was thrown violently against the pommel of his saddle. It was his death-blow. The Conqueror could fight no more !

Faint, suffering, dying, William was carried back to his palace at Rouen. But it was not quiet enough for his need, and he was removed to the Priory of St. Gervais, outside the city. There he lay during weeks of pain, and there at last he began to realize what his life had been. "Rueful deeds he did," says the old chronicler, "and ruefully he suffered." And thus the merciless King was brought to a real penitence for the sins of pride and power, that rose to darken his dying hours.

We are told by a writer of his time, that he now felt how he had conquered England by wrong, by warfare and bloodshed, how cruel and oppressive he had been in robbing men of their possessions, and causing the death of multitudes by famine or sword. He dared not now bequeath to his son the crown which he himself had usurped, though he expressed his wish that William, his third son, should succeed him on the English throne. He made a will disposing of the riches he had unjustly heaped up, giving most of it to churches, and setting aside a special sum to rebuild those he had so lately burnt at Mantes. Normandy had to be left to his foolish and rebellious son Robert, but William he despatched at once to England—with a letter to the wise Archbishop Lanfranc—to look after the kingdom.

Of all his family, there was now with him only his youngest son Henry, a lad of nineteen, called "*Beauclerc*" because he was a good scholar. He asked his dying father what portion there should be for him. "Five thousand pounds of silver from my hoard," said the King. "But what use will that be to me," asked poor Henry, "if I have no dwelling-place?" And it is

said that the father replied, in some of the most gracious words he had ever spoken. "Be patient, my son, and trust in the Lord, and let thine elders go before thee!" Henry the First of England must often afterwards have thought of these words during his time of waiting for his father's throne. Just then, he was only anxious to secure his portion at once, and hurried away from his father's bedside to get it, and put it in a place of safety before the King's death should open the way to confusion and plunder.

There was one thing yet left for William to do before his death. This was to set free the men held captive in prison for reasons of state. Many an English noble was among these, including the innocent young brother and son of King Harold, who had grown up from childhood in prison. The King at last agreed to set all free, including his brother Odo. On this point he gave way to the entreaties of his friends, though he foretold that it would cause the ruin and death of many.

As the early September dusk closed round the sick chamber where prelates and nobles were waiting for the end, we may imagine how the King's thoughts would travel back to the kingdom he had coveted, and so hardly won. He had meant to rule England well, but his own pride and passion and greed had carried him far from the path of right he had marked out for himself. Yet he could say that the country was now so orderly that "a man might travel over the kingdom with his bosom full of gold," unmolested, and "no man must kill another," however great the injury he might have received from him. He could set this against such cruel laws as that any man who should kill the deer for food which the King wished to kill for

sport, should be punished by losing his eyes. Perhaps, too, he thought of Earl Edwin, or of the young and brave Earl Waltheof, whom he had cruelly doomed to death. Truly there was much in his English reign that the dying Conqueror must have dreaded to recall. Nor could he forget the trap he had set for the brave English Harold when he had him in his power, in forcing from him the promise he had no right to make, nor the advantage he took of it in setting all Europe against Harold as a usurper and a perjurer.

No doubt his thoughts also travelled back to the happier time, when, in the face of great difficulties, he wooed and won at last his loving wife and helpful Queen. She had counted for so much in his life, whose early days had been so beset with foes. For as a child of seven, he had been left fatherless in his rough Duchy, like a "lamb among the wolves," as his father had sadly said. One guardian of his after another had been murdered, even in his own presence. He could remember how, on one occasion, his faithful servant had saved his life only by carrying him to a hiding place, and how, while still a boy, he had to ride across the country for his life. Scarcely could he trust any one about him. If his early life had not been so troubled that he had to be constantly fighting, he might never have thought of taking England!

But his life had been lived. All was over now, and human glory seemed empty enough. He had confessed his sins, as he saw them now, had done what he could to leave his realms in order, and as the morning bell rang for prayers, he raised his hands and breathed his last prayer for the forgiveness of Him Who alone could forgive the penitent sinner.

For the dead King there were none of the kindly offices usually bestowed on the poorest. The company of friends about him hastened away to look after their own affairs in the confusion that must follow, The servants carried off everything—even the bed on which he lay ; and the body was left on the bare floor—like that of the poorest monk—no one seeming to care what became of it. At last a Norman knight named Herlouin, undertook at his own cost to provide for a fitting burial. But even this was not easily done. For when the funeral was proceeding through the streets of Caen to the monastery he had built, part of the town broke into a blaze, and the procession was dispersed, only the monks remaining in their places. Then when the funeral oration had been pronounced in the great Abbey, where many bishops and nobles were waiting, a man named Ascelin Fitz-Arthur stood up to declare that the ground on which they were standing had been unjustly taken from his father, and forbade the burial in the soil which he claimed as his own inheritance. A bargain had to be made on the spot for a place in which to lay the dead Conqueror, and the whole of the land was afterwards duly paid for. The English poetess, Mrs. Hemans, has written a poem about this scene. Here are the last three verses :

“Shame glowed on each dark face
Of those proud and steel-girt men,
And they bought with gold a place
For their leader’s dust, e’en then !

“A little earth for him
Whose banner flew so far
And a peasant’s tale could dim
The name, a nation’s star,

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“One deep voice then arose
From a heart that wrongs had riven.
Oh, who shall number those
That were but heard in heaven !”

Thus sadly closed the earthly life of William of Normandy, the strongest and not by any means the worst ruler of his time.

CHAPTER XIV

HENRY THE FIRST AND ARCHBISHOP ANSELM

1087-1135

THE young Henry Beauclerc had much reason to remember his father's dying counsel to "be patient," for he had a hard time of it with his elder brothers. William, called Rufus—or the Red—from the colour of his hair and complexion—was at once crowned in England, with the people's consent, and Robert became Duke of Normandy. Notwithstanding Robert's misconduct as a son, he was honest, brave, frank and generous, and much better liked than was William Rufus. For, though William was a great captain like his father, he was a bad man and a bad King. Many Norman barons in England would rather have had Duke Robert as king, and Bishop Odo, being now set free, headed a rebellion against William. The Bishop of Durham, from his strong castle, helped Odo, but the good Bishop Wulfstan remained staunch and loyal to the King. William soon crushed the revolt, and then tried to make himself master of Normandy as well as England. There was long strife and much fighting between the two brothers, till King Philip of France persuaded them to make peace. William was allowed to keep part of Normandy, and

both agreed that whichever of them should die first, should leave his dominions to his brother.

Prince Henry was left out of this agreement, and part of Normandy, which he had bought from Robert out of his portion from his father, went back to the Duke. Henry, who had fought bravely for Robert, was very angry at this treatment, and, in order to defend his property, he took possession of the strong abbey fort of Mount St. Michael on the sea sands of Normandy. From it he sallied out to plunder the neighbourhood, and there his brothers besieged him. He and his men were so closely shut up, that they were in danger of perishing from lack of water. Robert, hearing of this, enabled him to procure water, and sent him some wine from his own table. William was angry with his brother for this, but Robert nobly answered, "What! shall I suffer my brother to die of thirst? Where shall we find another when he is gone?"

Prince Henry, however, not very long after, had to surrender to his brothers, and then, having lost all that his father had left him, wandered about with a few followers as poor as himself, till by and by he was called to become Lord of Domfront, in Normandy, once conquered by his father, and to protect it against a fierce foe.

About this time there began the wars called the Crusades, of which we shall hear more in the future. Kings and nobles all through Europe, were preparing to try to take Jerusalem and the Holy Land out of the hands of the fierce Turks. Many people liked to make pilgrimages thither, and many of these had been killed or cruelly treated by the Turks. A monk named Peter the Hermit had gone through Europe, calling on

the Christian kingdoms to go to war for the possession of Jerusalem ; and nobles, princes and knights hastened to join the undertaking, fastening the cross as a badge on their right shoulders, on which account they were called *Crusaders*, from the Latin word for *cross*.

Robert of Normandy, who loved fighting better than governing, was one of the first to join the Crusade, but he found that he had not enough money to go, as he desired, at the head of an army of his nobles and people. He agreed, therefore, to pledge his duchy to King William for a large sum of money, and set out with a magnificent train, in pursuit of glory, and also, as he believed, to win in this way his soul's salvation. With him, too, went the restless Edgar Atheling, who had nothing to do at home. In order to raise the money promised, King William had to put another heavy tax upon the English people, which caused great discontent, and his new power in Normandy made him so ambitious that he began to make war against King Philip in the hope of being, some day, king in his place, which was the first of many wars between England and France. But he had not much success, and was soon glad to make a peace, which lasted for many years.

At home he found part of Wales in revolt, which he put down on his return. And England was threatened * with invasion from King Magnus of Norway, who brought with him young Harold, the son of the last Saxon king. But he could find no foothold in England, and soon sailed back to his own land.

One of the many unjust and wicked acts of William Rufus was his making a traffic of lands which had been given in trust to the bishops, for keeping up

Church services. These lands Rufus regarded as he did the lands of the barons, which were held in "fief" from the King; that is, the barons were to bring a certain number of men and horses to serve the King in his wars, or else to pay money instead. When a new bishop had to be appointed, Rufus tried to make him pay a large price for his bishopric, and sometimes he kept a bishop's place empty for a long time, so that he might keep the money which should have gone to the support of the Church; and as he cared nothing for religion himself, he often appointed bad or unfit men to sacred offices.

So long as the wise and good Lanfranc lived, as Archbishop of Canterbury, the evil ways of the King were kept in check. But when Lanfranc died, William, who wanted the profits of the Church lands, refused for a long time to appoint any one in his place. When he did so at last, it was in a very curious way, against his own will, and also against the will of the new Archbishop, whom all knew to be a truly good man, and whom men have called St. Anselm.

Anselm was the son of a rich but wicked nobleman in Italy. His mother was a noble and pious woman, who taught her son and daughter with loving care. Anselm used to think much about God, and as his mother said that He lived high up in heaven, the boy thought that if he could climb to the top of the highest hills near, he could live there with God. One night he dreamed that he had gone thither and had been fed with beautiful white bread—the bread of the Lord. He afterwards thought much of this dream, and learned from his mother that we are everywhere in God's presence, and that Christ is "the Bread of life."

When he was only fifteen, he wished to become a monk. But when his mother died, his mind and conduct changed a good deal. His father was very harsh, and when he could not bear his unhappy home any longer, he ran away. With one faithful servant, he set out to cross the Alps, just as he had tried to climb the mountains in his dream. While toiling up a snowy pass, he became faint with cold and hunger, and might even have died, had not his servant sought and found a crust of bread—all that was left of the food they had brought from home. Anselm ate the bread and went on much strengthened, remembering his dream and his good mother's teaching.

When he reached France, he went at first as a student into the Abbey of Avranches, and afterwards to the famous monastery of Bec, built by a good and brave Norman noble named Herlouin, who wished to retire from the world of strife, and chose this place, because of a beautiful brook or "beck" which flowed through the valley. He helped to build the abbey with his own hands, and became its abbot. But he needed some one to help him who had more learning than himself, and he was very glad when he found a great teacher named Lanfranc, also an Italian, who remained at Bec for nearly twenty years, till his teaching had made it the most famous abbey in Normandy.

Anselm went to Bec to learn from Lanfranc, and the two became close friends. Three years later Lanfranc was appointed abbot of Cæn, the new abbey of William the Conqueror, and afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury. When Lanfranc left Bec, Anselm became prior, and afterwards abbot. He was a learned

scholar, as well as a good abbot and a holy man, and the books he wrote about great Christian truths are still ranked among the best ever written. The Conqueror himself liked much to talk with him, and sent for him when he was dying ; but Anselm was at that time too ill to go to him.

Anselm became known and revered in England, where he sometimes had to visit the branches of his abbey. During the King's long delay to appoint a new archbishop after Lanfranc's death, many people thought of Anselm for the office. But Anselm had no desire to become Archbishop of Canterbury. He knew too well the trouble he would have with the King and the people, and he loved the peace and quiet of his beloved abbey. His friends wished him to come to England, so as to be at hand, which he refused to do, and came at last, only because an old baron who was his friend sent to tell him that he was very ill, and entreated him to come to see him before he died.

Just at this time, William Rufus, too, was very ill, and thought himself dying. The bishops and nobles about him urged him to prepare for death by repentance and by trying to undo some of the wrongs he had done, by releasing prisoners unjustly held captive, and doing right by the Church at Canterbury. The King was frightened, and sent for Anselm, who spoke to him kindly yet faithfully, as he would to a dying man. The King promised amends, and his courtiers begged him to appoint an archbishop at once. Who should it be ? All had the one thought, but none dared to speak, till the right name seemed to be forced from the lips of the King himself—"Anselm of Bec !"

Anselm was summoned again, but declined to be

appointed. Then—we are told by an eye-witness—he was brought by force to the King's beside, the crosier or pastoral staff was forced into his clenched hand, and all present joined in the shout "Long live the Archbishop of Canterbury!"

But though Anselm became Archbishop against his will, he was determined to do his duty, though it cost a long struggle with the King, who soon recovered from his illness and went on in his evil ways. Anselm would not do anything for the King which he thought unjust, and rebuked him for wrong-doing as no one had dared to do before. When Rufus became angry, the humble and loving Anselm showed himself a lion in resisting wrong. "Treat me as a free man," he said, "and I devote myself and all that I have to your service; but if you treat me as a slave, you shall have neither me nor mine!" Finally the King became so enraged that Anselm gave him a parting blessing, and left England to go to consult the Pope, not returning till after William's death.

During the last years of his life, William was very busy in rebuilding London Bridge in stone, and also built the great hall at Westminster, though it had not the beauty of the fine Westminster Hall of later years. For these great works, William had to tax the people very heavily, and many unjust acts and cruel forest laws made him more and more hated by the people.

His tyrannical reign was suddenly cut short, while he was still in his prime. One fine August afternoon he went with his brother Henry and a train of his courtiers, to hunt in the New Forest so fatal to his family. There he was instantly killed by an arrow which struck a

tree and glanced back at his breast. No one ever knew who shot that arrow, though one knight is said to have fled the country forthwith. The King's body was found by a poor charcoal-burner, and carried in his cart to Winchester, to be buried.

“ Then a creaking cart came slowly, which a charcoal burner drove ;

He found the dead man lying,—a ghastly treasure-trove !
He raised the corpse for charity, and on his waggon laid,
And so the Red King drove in state, from out the forest-glade.”

Prince Henry was as prompt in looking after his dead brother's kingdom, as he had been in securing his dying father's gift. Putting spurs to his horse he rode straight to Winchester, to seize the royal treasure, as a step towards securing the crown, threatening to kill any one who would stand in his way. He did not find much opposition, for the English people greatly preferred him to the Norman Robert. Three days after his brother's death, King Henry the First was crowned in Westminster Abbey by the Bishop of London, in the absence of Archbishop Anselm.

Henry Beauclerc was brave, resolute, clear-headed and learned for those days, but he was selfish, crafty and cold-hearted. He ruled England strongly, and kept peace and order within it for English and Norman—baron and peasant alike. The first thing he did was to give out a written promise, called a “ Charter,” that the wrongs of his brother's reign should be undone, and the “ good laws of Edward ” (or of Edgar, as they really were) should be put in force once more.

King Henry soon sent for Archbishop Anselm, who was able to be of great use to him in two very important matters. A month after he had been crowned, his

brother Robert came back from Palestine, having gained much honour for his courage. The crown of Jerusalem had been offered to him, but he wanted rather the crown of England, which William had promised him in case he should survive him. The Norman barons agreed to help him, and he arrived in England, like his father, thirty years before, to seize the crown at once. A great English army went out to meet him. Archbishop Anselm helped to collect them, and came himself at the head of the men on his land. But he did better than fight, for he persuaded the two brothers to make a peaceful agreement. Henry gave up Normandy, and kept the crown of England, promising that if he died first, Robert should reign in his place.

The other matter in which Anselm did good service to Henry was that of his marriage in the face of a great difficulty. Henry loved and wished to marry the young Princess Edith, the daughter of the good Queen Margaret of Scotland. As we have already seen, the children of Malcolm and Margaret were brought to England for refuge, on the death of their parents, and Edith had been brought up by her Aunt Christina, who had been made abbess of Romsey. In the rough reign of Rufus, the abbess thought that a convent was the safest place for her niece, and she forced her, while still a child, to take the veil. This seemed to make it impossible for her to marry the King, as she herself wished to do. But she explained to Anselm that she had been made to take the veil by her aunt, only to save her from rough treatment, and that she had never wished to be a nun. Then the wise Archbishop said she was not bound to be one, and that she was free to marry the English king.

Shortly after Anselm married Henry to Edith, who seems to have changed her name to Matilda, perhaps in honour of Henry's mother. She was at once crowned Queen, to the great joy of the English people, who now had again a queen of their own old royal stock. They thought the dream of Edward the Confessor was now about to come true, and the "green tree" was coming back to its place, as indeed it did at last, not in the son, but in the grandson of Matilda. She seems to have been a good queen, and, like her mother and husband, she liked to encourage those men who tried to preserve the beautiful old stories of Britain, such as the legends of King Arthur and his Round Table, then first written in English.

Anselm and the King remained friends, and did much between them to maintain the right and to put down wrong in England. Among other things they made a law which forbade the slave-trade, the wicked traffic by which men still used to be sold in England like brute beasts. But in some things they did not at all agree. Henry, like his father and brother, thought that every one should obey the King as supreme ruler, while Anselm thought that the Bishop and other clergymen should first obey the Pope. Thus two different powers seemed to grow up in the land. Each of them has often threatened English freedom, but each was at times a check on the other, till at last matters came to be settled in a way that gives our British Empire the freest government in the world.

But though Anselm was, as we must believe, sometimes mistaken in what he tried to do, we must honour him for always standing by what he thought right and true. More than once he said that he would rather lose

his life than do as the King wished, when he thought it wrong to do so. And at last he and the King settled their dispute, and were free to attend to the general good of the kingdom. There were some foolish fashions of those days, which Anselm tried to discourage. One was the wearing of long hair by the men, which he thought silly and untidy, and another was that of wearing shoes with very long turned-up points, which often reached nearly to the knee. Both must have been very inconvenient fashions, but though Anselm succeeded in much greater things, he never quite succeeded in putting an end to these.

The good Archbishop Anselm passed peacefully away just before Easter, 1109, leaving King Henry still many troubled years to reign. During these, however, England enjoyed much peace, and Normans and English became more like one people, though both often complained of heavy taxes, for Henry was fond of money, and needed it for his warfare. His brother Robert tried to break the agreement he had made, and ruled Normandy so badly, that having defeated Robert at Tenchebrai in France and put him in prison for life, Henry finally took possession of it himself. And after that, he helped Edgar Atheling to place his young nephew Edgar on the Scottish throne.

But sad things happened in his own family. He made his young daughter, Matilda or Maud, when only twelve years old, marry Henry V, Emperor of Germany, who died soon after. Then his wife, good Queen Matilda, died, when her only son William was but sixteen. Henry was so anxious that William should succeed him peaceably that he got the people at that time to acknowledge him as their future king.

But this was not to be, for a very sad event occurred. Henry, with his son, had gone over to Normandy, and had just settled things to his satisfaction. He was returning to England with young Prince William, who was on a different vessel, called the *White Ship*, with a large company of his young friends. We are told that they as well as the crew had been drinking freely, and the ship lingered behind the others. Then she struck a sunken rock, and went down, with nearly all on board. The Prince might have been saved, but went back for his sister, and was lost. When the sad news reached the King, he fell unconscious to the ground, and was never seen to smile again.

Henry now did all he could to secure the crown for his daughter, the young widowed Empress, of whom he was very fond. He made her marry Geoffrey, Count of Anjou, to be her protector after his own death, and when her little boy, Henry, was born, he hoped that some day he would be king. This hope came true, but there were many years of trouble first. Henry, who had been for some time in Normandy, looking after the interests of his daughter and her children, died in December, 1135. His long reign of thirty-five years had been the time of the greatest peace in England since the days of Edward the Confessor. Though he was often harsh and stern, he was called "The Lion of Justice," and the people respected him; if they did not love him. The old *Chronicle* says, "He was a good man, and great was the awe of him; no man durst ill-treat another in his time. He made peace for men and deer."

CHAPTER XV

THE KING AND THOMAS À
BECKET

1135-1179

THE next nineteen years were full of disorder, cruelty and misery for poor England. Henry's nephew, Stephen of Blois, a son of William the Conqueror's daughter Adela, had sworn to help the Empress Maud and her young son, Prince Henry. But instead of this he hurried over to London to persuade the people of England to make himself king. Everything was in such disorder that the London merchants would have a man crowned at once, instead of waiting for a boy, and they hoped that Henry's sister's son would rule well. At first they liked him greatly, for he was generous and brave, kind and pleasant in his manner ; and seemed a mild and good-natured man. And as his wife was a granddaughter of the good Queen Margaret, they knew that his children would be of the old royal stock.

But Stephen was not strong enough to rule in such a time, for he was not wise and firm enough to deal with the great robber barons and bishops, who were guilty of much cruelty in their strong castles. Sad stories are told of the ways in which they tortured helpless

people to get their property. And though Henry had hanged many robber outlaws, there were still many left in the forests and lonely places. Things grew so bad that we are told "every man plundered his neighbour as much as he could" and that "if two or three men came riding into a town, all the people ran away to hide, fearing lest they might be robbers." This was a sad change from the good order which William the Conqueror had established, and Henry had enforced.

But the Empress Maud had many friends among the barons and bishops. Stephen had a brother, Henry, Bishop of Winchester, who at first stood by his brother, but afterwards went over to the side of Maud. Four years after Stephen had been crowned, the Empress Maud came over to England, and many of the barons took up her cause. There was fighting and skirmishing, towns and castles were taken and burned, and much of fair England was once more plundered and laid waste. The Empress subdued a large part of England, and, in a pitched battle at Lincoln, took Stephen prisoner. She was acknowledged Queen at Winchester, though she could not be crowned, because the men of London had crowned Stephen, and did not like or want the haughty Empress Maud, who had much of her grandfather's temper, but stood by their own Queen Matilda, who, in her husband's name, claimed their support. Maud for a time triumphed, but, in the end, even her own friends grew tired of her arrogance, and Bishop Henry of Winchester went back to his brother's side. At last everybody grew weary of the wretched war, during which the poor all over England were often starving for lack of food, and inno-

cent people were frequently shut up in castles, and even tortured to death. So terrible was the time that it was often said that "Christ and His Saints must be asleep!"

The end of it came through a treaty made at a place called Wallingford. The Empress Maud agreed to let Stephen reign in peace, on condition that her son Henry should be king when he died; and as Stephen's elder son was now dead, the King was quite willing to promise this. Stephen lived only one year longer, during which he did what he could to restore some order to the unhappy kingdom.

When Stephen was dead, all the English people were glad to receive young Prince Henry as their king, for now, at last, they had a king of the old royal line to rule over them. Now the "green tree" had really come back to its place. Then his father was not a Norman, but of the rough, brave stock of the House of Anjou, and styled "Plantagenet," because he used to wear in his helmet a sprig of broom, which was called "Planta—genet." This was in order to let his friends know who he was, for the knights of that time wore in battle visors, or masks of metal bars which protected the face and hid the features. From that sprig of broom in his father's helmet, Henry and his descendants took the name of *Plantagenet*.

Henry, who was a very clever boy, had been sent, when nine years old, to England, where he lived for four years studying under a tutor. When he was fifteen, he came back again and went with a large train of followers, all the way to Carlisle, where he wished to be "knighted"—that is, set apart for noble deeds—by his uncle David, King of Scotland, who was

always his great friend and ally. Henry was a strong, sturdy young man, red-haired and ruddy, frank and friendly, though often rough, in manner, and ready—sometimes *too* ready—in speech. He was a fair scholar, full of energy and force, anxious to keep order and uphold what he thought right. But he was too impatient to do it always wisely ; and sometimes did himself great harm by letting his rash and passionate temper get the better of him. He did not care for pomp or ceremony, or fine clothes, but was always ready to fare as his men did. Some one said of him that he never rested, but was always on his legs from morning till night. And if he had had the humble, devout spirit of Alfred, he might have been as great a king.

Having lived so long in England, Henry knew all the English laws and customs, which he was determined to keep up. At first all seemed to go well. He sent away the paid soldiers from Normandy and Flanders, who had been very disorderly during the “ Civil War ” between his mother and Stephen. He preserved the good laws of the kingdom, and he ordered the destruction of all the robber castles, thus putting a stop to the wicked and cruel deeds they had sheltered.

But Henry rashly made two great mistakes, from which he suffered during the rest of his life. Before he became king, while only nineteen, he married, while in France, Eleanor of Poitou, who was much older than himself, and had a very violent temper. She had been married to King Louis of France, but he had sent her away for her evil doings ; and Prince Henry was said to have married her for her great possessions against the will of Louis, who from that time became his enemy and hers. As Henry inherited Anjou and

Normandy from his father and mother, and now became master of Poitou and Aquitaine through his wife, he was the ruler of a large part of France, which, of course, the French King much disliked.

The other great mistake which Henry made, was in appointing Thomas à Becket to be Archbishop of Canterbury. Becket's father, like many other Norman tradesmen, had come to live in England, thinking it "fitter for trading, and better stored with the merchandise in which he used to deal." He soon attained wealth and influence as a citizen, and became a "portreeve" (or mayor) of London. His gifted son Thomas was a favourite with the Norman barons and "clerks" (as the clergy were then called), who were often with his father. He studied diligently, first at Oxford, and then at the University of Paris. He was tall and handsome, lively and witty, and as obstinate as the King himself. At first he gave himself up to pleasure, but as his father had lost his wealth, he went to take an office under Archbishop Theobald. He became most useful to him and also to the King, in helping to drive away the foreign soldiers, and tear down the robber castles, as well as in the King's Court of Justice.

The King made Becket Chancellor, and the two became close friends, and were nearly always together. There is a story that one day when they were riding in company, they met a poor old man, miserably clad in rags, and shivering with cold. The King said that it would be a good deed to provide the poor man with a warm garment. Becket agreed that it would, whereupon the King playfully tried to pull off Becket's fine red cloak, lined with ermine, in order to give it to the poor man. Becket resisted and the two young

S. Thomas archiep̃s
Cantuariēñ.



THOMAS À BECKET

men nearly pulled each other off their horses. At last Becket had to let go his cloak, which the King at once bestowed on the astonished old man, who did not know who these strange young knights might be.

The Chancellor was a kind of Prime Minister, and possessed much power in many ways. He kept the Great Seal, which sealed all the royal decrees, looked after the property of orphan children; and had charge of all the business of the kingdom. Becket was, thus, a very great person indeed, and we are told that he lived in greater splendour and luxury than the King, with a multitude of servants and a numerous train to follow him when he went abroad. One thing that we are told of his luxury seems rather strange nowadays. This is, that, every day, he had the floor of his apartment covered with clean hay or straw in winter, and with green rushes or boughs in summer; so that the knights and barons who came to see him, might not soil their fine clothes by sitting on a dirty floor. He loved hunting and gaming and riding, and was sometimes a soldier too. He took seven hundred knights at his own expense to fight for the King in one of his wars in France. He is also said to have entertained there, for forty days, twelve hundred knights with their four thousand men. And when he went as ambassador to France, the French people were astonished at his splendid following.

The King was much pleased with Becket, because he helped him in trying to restore law and order, though he once withstood Henry when he wished to renew an old tax, in a way he thought oppressive to the people. And when Archbishop Theobald died, Henry determined to make Becket his successor, contrary to the

advice that Theobald and the Empress Maud had given, as well as the English clergy, who in this were wiser than Henry. Becket, himself, did not wish it either ; and, when Henry proposed it to him, he said, laughing, as he pointed to his own gay clothing, “ You are choosing a fine dress to figure at the head of your Canterbury monks ! ” He also told the King that he would soon hate him as much as he loved him now, as he knew that he would never agree to what Henry wished to do.

As soon as he was appointed to his high office, Becket gave up all his luxurious ways, living chiefly on bread and water, and wearing sackcloth next his skin—seldom changing it—according to the strange idea which people had of what it meant to be a saint. For though Becket was not a saint like the holy Anselm, he wished to appear one, after the fashion of the time.

A great council was held by the Pope at Tours in France, the year after Becket became Archbishop, and he was received there with great honour. After his return, trouble arose. William the Conqueror had given to the bishops a court of their own, which, in those rough times, had often sheltered the poor and unfortunate from cruel tyranny. But many of the clergy and even of the bishops of those times were themselves bad men, and did many wicked things, in which they were sheltered by this Court, and this made the clergy think they were not bound to obey the laws of the kingdom. It was even found out that during the few years the King had reigned, as many as a hundred murders had been committed by them, some of which had never been justly punished. In one very

bad case the King demanded that the murderer should be given up for trial by the law, but this Becket refused to permit.

The King felt that he must rule his kingdom, and calling the bishops together, asked them whether or not they were willing to submit to the ancient laws and customs. In the end, all agreed to do this, though Becket was only with great difficulty persuaded to give the desired promise.

If Henry had been a wiser man, and had gone more gradually to work, things might have gone on better, but he was impatient to get everything settled at once ; and he drew up a set of rules to make all subject to the same laws. Becket signed these rules most unwillingly ; but when the Pope afterwards said they were all wrong, he refused to obey them. Henry was enraged by his refusal, and called a great council of barons and bishops, which found Becket guilty of disobedience, and took from him all that belonged to him. The Bible says that " he who ruleth his spirit is better than he that taketh a city," and if Henry could have ruled his spirit then, it would have been better for him than taking ten cities. But—besides what he had done—he brought up some old debts which he said Becket owed him, and required him to account for all he had spent while he was Chancellor. It was impossible for Becket to do this, and he saw plainly that the King *did* hate him now, and meant to ruin him. The barons, too, were enraged against him, and wished to have him killed as a traitor. But Becket would not give in, and appearing in his robes of state and office, he walked out with great dignity amidst cries of " Traitor ! Traitor ! " to receive the applause of the

people outside, who thought he was fighting in their cause. He left England at once, in disguise, and reached France in safety. There he remained for six years, while the contest went on between the angry King and the stubborn prelate, each making the other feel the weight of his anger.

At last a sort of peace was patched up by the friends of both, and Becket was allowed to return to England, where he was received with much joy by the people of Canterbury. But he himself was not happy in his return, and when the people of Canterbury met him with joyous shouts, he only replied "I am come to die among you." It was even so.

The King had been so anxious to secure the succession of his son Henry, that he had caused him to be crowned some time before by the Archbishop of York. Henry the First had been crowned by the Bishop of London and Harold by the Archbishop of York; but Thomas declared that no one but the Archbishop of Canterbury could rightfully crown a king. He had no sooner landed in England, than he put out of their office the Archbishop of York and the Bishop of London and Salisbury, who had also taken part in the coronation. He was asked if he meant to bring fire and sword into the kingdom. But when Henry heard the news, he broke into a violent passion and asked if none of all his knights would deliver him from this troublesome priest! One of them, named Reginald Fitzurse with three others at once left the court secretly and separately; and travelled night and day till they reached Canterbury. There they found Becket in his Archbishop's palace close to his church, in company with some of his clergy. They required that he

should at once submit and undo the wrong he had done, hinting that, if he held out, it would be at the risk of his life. But Becket would yield to no threats. The angry knights went out to arm themselves, and Becket's friends urged him to escape at once. He only replied, "I have no need of your advice; I know what I ought to do."

The knights soon returned, each armed with a sword and an axe. They found the door barred, but were shown the way in by a window. A cry rang out, "They are armed! They are armed!" In the early December dusk, Becket's terrified friends hurried him along the dark arched cloisters and into the church. But the knights were at their heels. As Becket entered a little side chapel on his way into the church, Reginald Fitzurse called out "There is that traitor!" "I am no traitor, but a priest of God," said Becket, standing against a pillar, and facing his foes. "Flee!" said the knights, "or you are a dead man." "I will never flee!" was the reply. One of the knights tried to take him prisoner, but Becket shook him violently off. Then there were a few angry blows; and the great Archbishop lay dead in the sanctuary of his own church.

When the King heard of this terrible deed, he burst into lamentation, and would not taste food for three days. He knew that he would be held responsible for the crime which he had caused, though he had probably not really intended it. Of course many terrible things were threatened against him, but in time it became possible to settle the matter. Then, partly to be out of the way, he went to conquer Ireland, where an English earl, whom people called "Strong-

bow," had been helping an Irish king, and where Henry soon gained supreme power over the four kings of the country. But he was called back to Normandy to meet the Pope's messengers ; and there it was settled that the King should give up some of his demands, and promise to go on a Crusade, unless he should, in the meantime, be set free from his promise. Becket was looked upon as a saint and martyr by the people, and many pilgrims used to come to pray at his shrine. There Henry himself went at last, as a penitent, to ask forgiveness for what still lay heavy on his conscience. He wept and prayed on the spot where Becket had been killed, doubtless with real sorrow, and then allowed the monks and bishops to scourge him, as a penance for his sin.

King Henry was now ruling wider dominions than any English king before him. " William the Lion," King of Scotland, fell into his power by a sudden surprise and had to swear " fealty " (or submission) to him ; so he was now " overlord " of Britain and Ireland, besides his great possessions in France.

But Louis of France was his bitter enemy, and his ungrateful sons, whom he had treated with the most generous affection, began to plot against him, helped by some of the robber barons, who hated him for his strict justice. The King, though deeply grieved by the conduct of his sons, never lost his pluck or his skill in war. He put down one revolt after another, forgave his rebellious sons, and tried by kindness to win them from their evil ways. At last they began to quarrel with each other, and the eldest, young Prince Henry, when about to fight a battle with his brother, died of a fever brought on by his excitement. When he knew

that death was near, he entreated his father to come to him, but Henry was advised not to trust himself near him, though he sent his son a ring in token of forgiveness. When, however, he heard of the death of the Prince, the King was filled with sorrow and self-reproach.

Four years later, when he was defeated by some of his foes in Normandy, and was pursued by them from place to place, he found that his youngest son John, whom he had specially loved and favoured, had turned against him. This blow broke his heart, and brought on a fever, from which he died at Chinon in France after his long reign of thirty-five years.

CHAPTER XVI

RICHARD LION-HEART, THE CRUSADER KING

1189-1199

KING HENRY was succeeded by his second son Richard, whom we know as "*Cœur-de-Lion*," or Lion-heart." He had not shown a kind or grateful heart, in his conduct to his father, but he tried to prove his repentance by honouring the faithful friends who had stood by the King against himself.

Richard was in the prime of life, tall and handsome, and his golden hair and changeful blue eyes seemed to proclaim him a Saxon. He was brave, generous, open and sincere, but he was also rash, passionate, proud and extravagant. Lacking his father's shrewd sense and steady will, he often acted most imprudently, and sometimes very cruelly. He was less a king than a wandering knight, looking for fame and what he thought great deeds, instead of doing his duty as a ruler. There were some excuses to be made for him, however. King Henry, you remember, made a vow to join another Crusade for rescuing the Holy Land from the Turks. But as he had so much to do at home, he was released from his vow, on condition that his son should go in his stead. Richard was, therefore, fulfilling his

father's promise as well as his own wishes, when he prepared for a great expedition to Palestine ; and perhaps he thought he could do more for England's renown by his brave deeds abroad, than by trying to rule his kingdom at home.

It was a great pity that, in preparing for a pious enterprise, he and his people were guilty of many wrongs. A king who went on a crusade needed a very great deal of money, for he had to take with him all that he would need for paying and supporting his soldiers in the countries through which he passed. King Henry had left him much money, as well as jewels, silver and gold. But all this was not nearly enough for a king who spent as freely as Richard did ; so he sold manors and earldoms and the high offices of the kingdom—even that of Chief Justice ; and he also sold back to William of Scotland the rights he had gained over him. He made the people pay heavy taxes, and in every way tried to force money from those who had it.

Many of his subjects also wished to join in this Crusade, and in order to get money, they oppressed others, especially the Jews. There were many of these now in the kingdom, and, by their skill and industry, they had become rich. At the time of Richard's coronation, there had been a dreadful massacre and plunder of the Jews in London and other places ; and now many wicked things were done to get their money. It was hardly to be expected that Christians—so-called—could win the Holy Land from the Turks, when they began by plundering and oppressing its people at home !

Having made a bishop named Longchamp Governor of England during his absence, Richard was at

length ready to set out for Palestine, on the Third Crusade, at the head of a great army. King Philip of France also had been preparing to go; and as the hardships of the land journey were so great that the famous Emperor Frederick Barbarossa had already lost most of his army on the way, and had died on the borders of Syria, Richard and Philip agreed to take their troops by sea across the Mediterranean. They met on a great plain in the South of France, and held a review of their joint army of 100,000 men. This must have made a grand show, for there were many mounted knights, clad in armour, or coats of mail, which glittered in the sunshine like silver. They wore, also, shining helmets with the "visors" (or iron masks), which so hid their faces that they had to put strange devices of animals, or castles, or flowers, on their shields, so that their friends would know them, and these came to be known as "coats of arms." There were many gay flags and pennons too, and all were full of spirit and hope. But of that great multitude, few ever returned!

The French and English forces separated, and the first embarked at Genoa, while Richard with his English force met their fleet at Marseilles. The two young Kings, Philip and Richard, seemed at first better friends than their fathers had been, but both were proud, obstinate and irritable, though Richard was as impetuous and imprudent as Philip was cunning and treacherous. They swore friendship before starting, and each took an oath that neither they nor their barons would disturb the other's dominions while the war lasted.

Both fleets had to take shelter from storms in the island of Sicily, and stay in it all winter. There

Richard found his sister Joan—who was Queen Dowager of Sicily—imprisoned by an usurping enemy. He set her free, but so many disputes arose during the winter between Richard and Philip that they had to make a new treaty, in which Richard was freed from an old promise to marry Philip's sister.

This he was determined not to do, because he had long been in love with the Princess Berengaria of Navarre. He at once sent for Berengaria to come to meet him, under the care of his mother, Queen Eleanor. As soon as they arrived, and had, as we may be sure, a joyful meeting, the fleet set sail again for the Holy Land. On the way, the ship which carried the two royal ladies was driven by a tempest to the isle of Cyprus, where it was refused permission to enter the harbour. Richard was soon on the spot, and put the churlish prince in prison, but as he was a brave man, Richard forgave him so far as to have silver fetters made for him instead of the rough iron ones of which he complained. Then he married Berengaria, and sailed away with her to Palestine.

The Turks' great stronghold of Acre had been besieged for two years, and Richard and Philip arrived in time to help in taking it. The valiant prince Saladin defended it to the last, having put into it a strong garrison, while he himself remained outside with his army to fight the besieging one. Philip and Richard shared the danger and honour of every action, and so arranged the work of their troops, that, on one day, the English attacked the town while the French guarded the trenches, and on the next the French attacked, while the English mounted guard. But Richard's greater dash and success in action soon awoke the

jealousy of Philip. Then there arose disputes about a king for Jerusalem, in which he and Philip took different sides.

Notwithstanding this, however, the garrison of Acre was obliged to surrender, after a siege which had cost the lives of 300,000 men. And though the prisoners on both sides were to be given up to their friends, we are told that when Saladin would not agree to the surrender, Richard disgraced his name as a conqueror, by killing five thousand prisoners—a cruelty which led the Saracens to treat their prisoners in the same way.

The siege of Acre was soon followed by one of the greatest battles of that age, in which Richard's courage and good generalship saved the allied army, and gained the day. Forty thousand Saracens are said to have fallen on the field, and the strong fortress of Ascalon was taken. The army was pushed on towards Jerusalem, but when Richard was almost within sight of the Holy City, he found his troops fast melting away. Philip of France had gone long before, leaving some of his troops; and French, Germans and Italians were quite tired of the long conflict. Every one but Richard was anxious to return, and he might well have been desirous of doing the same. Things were going badly in England, and the King was much needed there. Still, he was very unwilling to leave the Holy Land without finishing his work and taking Jerusalem. As a last attempt to do this, he began a march to the Holy City. On the way, he seized a caravan of Turkish merchants, with their treasures in gold, silver, silk and spices. Then he found that Saladin had besieged Joppa (which had been taken and rebuilt), and that

the garrison would soon have had to surrender to his great army, if Richard had not come to their relief and defeated the besiegers. After that his soldiers did not want to fight any more, and he himself was taken ill. So he made a three years' truce with Saladin, by which the Crusaders were to keep the places they had won, and the Turks were still, after all, to keep Jerusalem.

Richard then sent away his fleet, with his Queen Berengaria, of whom we hear no more. He himself embarked at Acre with a party of his knights, in a swift-sailing ship, in order to return to England as soon as possible; for he had had much disturbing news ever since the first winter at Messina. William Longchamp had found it hard work to rule the robber barons; while there were in the forests many robbers of another sort, such as Robin Hood and his friends, who plundered the rich, but were kind to the poor. Then he had assumed all the power and state of a king, which provoked Prince John and the barons and bishops to join together to deprive him of his offices. Longchamp at first shut himself up in the Tower of London, and then escaped, disguised as a woman, to France. Prince John began to plot with the French King against his brother, but Queen Eleanor and the barons stopped that, by threatening to take away all his English possessions.

Although King Philip had promised not to attack the English King's dominions while he was in Palestine, he was already trying to take Normandy, and being very jealous of Richard, he began to spread false reports about his conduct in the war. Meantime, a very strange adventure happened to Richard. The ship he

sailed in was shipwrecked on the coast of the Adriatic Sea, so that he had to make his way home overland. In order to do this more safely, he put on the dress of a pilgrim. But as he passed through Germany, he spent his money so freely that people began to suspect who he was. At last Leopold, Duke of Austria, who had had a quarrel with him in the Holy Land, seized him in a village near Vienna, and shut him up in prison, hoping to get a great sum of money as his ransom.

The Emperor of Germany soon heard of this, and he claimed him as *his* prisoner, though he promised to pay Leopold a large share of the ransom he expected. The King of France was delighted to hear of Richard's captivity, and sent to invite Prince John to help him to make the most of the opportunity. He wanted not only to seize Normandy, but also to try to get Richard for his own prisoner, and keep him so always, if he could. But the Emperor would not give him up, and waited to secure the ransom.

It must have been hard for Richard to be thus shut up in prison, when there was so much that he wanted to do. But he was always plucky, and kept his good humour and his good spirits even there. When he was told of the plots of his brother to steal his kingdom, he at first looked grave, but presently said, with a smile, "My brother John is not made for conquering kingdoms!" There is a pretty story that the first person who found out where he was shut up was his faithful minstrel Blondel, who had been searching everywhere for him, and who at last recognized him by hearing some one singing in a castle near which he was resting. He felt sure it was the King, and, when he stopped,

Blondel began to sing the same song, so that Richard might know he was near. It is said that the song was one which the King himself had composed, for he was very fond of poetry, as well as music, and was called one of the "Troubadours," or minstrels.

There was great dismay in England when people heard that their King was a captive, and as there was no power to make the Emperor release him, all united to raise the ransom. The tax put upon the nation did not bring in nearly enough, so the bishops, abbots and nobles, who were all "vassals" of the King, paid each a fourth of their income, the clergy paid a tenth, and the plate in the churches and monasteries was melted down to make up the three hundred thousand pounds required, which was a very great sum in those days. Queen Eleanor and the Bishop of Rouen took the money to Germany, where they paid the Emperor and the Duke what each had bargained for. So, after fourteen weary months in prison, King Richard was set free at last, and able to go back to England.

It was well for him that he lost no time, for the wicked and treacherous Emperor began to think it would be a fine thing to make an alliance with the King of France, and if he got Richard into his power again, he might get still more money from King Philip and Prince John, who had already tried to bribe him to do this. The King had hardly got safely out to sea, when the Emperor's messengers reached Antwerp to take him prisoner.

The English people were delighted to have their hero back, for they were proud of the renown he had gained for England, in lands so far away. There was a

great festival at Winchester, where he was crowned over again, amid much rejoicing. Then he at once took an army over to Normandy, to settle matters with King Philip and Prince John. Philip had written to John, when he had heard that Richard was free: "Take care of yourself; the devil is broken loose!" There was little glory for any one in the fighting that followed. Richard made peace for a time with Philip, whom Prince John had deserted, in order to make friends again with his brother. He threw himself at Richard's feet; asking pardon for his treason, and through Queen Eleanor's intercession, the brothers were reconciled. "I forgive him," Richard said, "and hope I shall as easily forget his injuries as he will my pardon!"

While Richard was fighting in Normandy, various disturbances arose in England, and when these were put down, there came a famine caused by poor crops during several bad seasons. And the suffering from the famine caused a dreadful pestilence, of which so many died that there seemed hardly enough healthy people left to bury the dead.

Richard and Philip now seemed to be at peace, but the former had never forgiven the French King, and was waiting his chance for revenge, when an end came to his life and plans. He wanted money to finish a strong castle named Château Gaillard (Castle Sauey), which he had built on a high rock overlooking the Seine, which he thought would protect his Norman domain. He heard that a rich treasure had been dug up out of the ground in one of his French provinces, part of which was a round table with twelve knights sitting round it, all of gold—probably representing the good King Arthur and his Knights of the Round Table.

He ordered the baron in whose castle it was lying, to give it up to him, and though he was offered a share of it, he would not be content with that, but took his soldiers to seize the castle and the treasure too. While he was examining the approach, an archer named Bertrand sent an arrow into his shoulder, and the wound soon proved fatal. Nevertheless Richard took the castle, and hanged the garrison, as he had threatened.

But he had the archer Bertrand brought to him, and asked him what he had ever done to him that he should take his life. Bertrand replied that the King had killed his father and two brothers, and meant to kill him also ; and that even if he had to die a cruel death he would die happy in having rid the world of a tyrant. The King, instead of being angry at these words, seemed struck by their truth, and knowing that he was about to die, ordered Bertrand to be set free, and presented him with a sum of money from himself.

But dying kings cannot always be sure that they will be obeyed, and, in spite of this last command, Bertrand suffered a cruel death. In this miserable way ended Richard's reign of ten years, only five months of which had been spent in his own kingdom.

CHAPTER XVII

KING JOHN AND THE MAGNA CHARTA

1199-1216

IF Alfred, the "Shepherd of his people," was the best and noblest of our kings, John, the betrayer of his kingdom, may be called the worst and basest. It is not surprising that an ungrateful son, and a treacherous brother, should become a cruel, tyrannical King. Perhaps it was, in the end, good for England that his reign was so bad, for the English people were driven, by his oppression, to make a brave stand for their lost freedom, which became the foundation-stone of the power and well-being of our British Empire.

King John had much of his father's shrewdness and lively manner, and, by ruling justly, might have had a happy and prosperous reign. But he had also the cruel and treacherous nature seen in the old Counts of the House of Anjou, and as he gave way to it, this was his undoing.

His claim to the throne was not beyond dispute. When his brother, King Richard, went to the Holy Land, he said that Arthur of Brittany, the son of his next eldest brother, should be his heir. But before his death, he changed his mind, and, by his last will, made John heir to all his dominions, and made the

barons promise to uphold his right. Arthur was now only twelve years of age, but Philip of France undertook to protect him and uphold his claim to the kingdom. He sent him to Paris to be educated with his own son Louis, and the barons of Brittany, as well as Philip, were determined that Arthur should not give up his French provinces. After a time, however, his mother, the Duchess Constance, feared that Philip really meant to take the provinces for himself, so she took Arthur away from Philip's protection, and put him and herself under the care of King John. Arthur then did homage to John as his "over-lord" for Brittany, thus acknowledging him king of England. After this, John made friends with Philip, and gave his niece Blanche of Castile to Prince Louis for his wife, while he himself fell in love with a young French lady named Isabella, and put away his own wife in order to marry her, although she had previously been betrothed to a French nobleman.

A year or two later, disturbances arose in Normandy, partly arising out of this great wrong that he had done; and then trouble began in earnest. John wanted his barons to go over to Normandy with him, to put down the rebels, but as they were already displeased with his bad government, they refused to go, unless he would keep his promise to restore the rights he had taken from them. He managed to frighten them into doing as he wished; but they hated his rule more and more, and he treated the Norman barons so harshly that they appealed to Philip to help them against his tyranny.

Philip was quite willing to do this, and soon war began again between the two kings. Prince Arthur

was now about sixteen, and as he distrusted his uncle, he left England to join Philip's army. He was received with great honour, and knighted by Philip, who gave him his daughter for his wife and also gave him back his province of Brittany, with two others besides. The French army won several victories, and at first it seemed as if John would have to give up all his possessions in France, as Philip required him to do, after which Arthur was to reign as Duke of Brittany.

But, one day, Arthur, with a body of French troops, passed a castle called Mirebeau, where his grandmother Queen Eleanor was then staying. He was told that it was very poorly fortified, and defended by very few soldiers. Queen Eleanor had always taken her son's part against her grandson, and Arthur now thought it would be a fine thing to besiege the castle and get her into his power. These old castles had always walled courtyards, in one corner of which was a mound on which stood a strong tower called a "keep," because the lower part was usually a prison. The besiegers had already taken all but the "keep," when King John, hearing of the siege, hastened with a much larger force to rescue his mother. Arthur's small band was soon overpowered, and he and his two hundred knights were taken prisoners.

This might have proved of great use to the King, but, through his own wickedness, it brought him into misery and disgrace. He hated his brave nephew, and, not content with keeping him in prison, he thought it safest to put him to death. He tried to persuade one of his knights to murder the prince, but the knight said he was a gentleman, not a hangman. At last, a brave man called Hubert de Burgh, the keeper of the

castle where Arthur was shut up, told the King that he would do the wicked deed. But he only pretended that he had done so, and kept Arthur carefully hidden. Then the barons of Brittany vowed vengeance for the deed, and Hubert thought it would be best to let them know that Arthur was still alive. But when King John heard it, he was very angry, and removed his nephew to the castle of Rouen, the capital of Normandy. There, it is said, he murdered him with his own hands and threw his body into the river Seine. He also took Arthur's sister Eleanor, called the "Maid of Brittany" to England, and kept her there a prisoner as long as he lived. And other prisoners were so cruelly treated that twenty-two of them are said to have been starved to death in Corfe Castle in England.

The barons of Brittany, not getting their Princess back, asked King Philip to avenge the murder of Arthur. This he was quite ready to do, and began, with the help of his nobles, to take possession of John's French possessions. For the time, John seems to have been made a coward by his crime; for he made very little effort to keep his French provinces, but remained carelessly amusing himself with his young queen at Rouen. When he was told of the French victories, he only said, lightly, "Let the French go on; I will take, in a day, what it has cost them years to gain." One of our poets has said that "sinful heart makes feeble hand," and this was true of John at that point in his career. He was driven out of France, losing Normandy through the fall of the very castle that his brother had built to protect it, and returned to England to blame and worry his barons for his own disgrace. He compelled them to give him money for an expedi-

tion to Normandy, and then he changed his mind about going ; and when he did so, had to retreat in a panic before King Philip.

Now there began a long dispute with the Pope about choosing a new Archbishop of Canterbury. There was first a quarrel in England about it, and when the matter was brought before the Pope to decide, he refused the Bishop chosen by the King, and appointed an English Cardinal named Stephen Langton, a good and learned man, who deserves to stand in the first rank as a champion of the liberties of England. The King refused to accept him for a bishop, and when the Pope threatened to stop all religious worship in the kingdom, the King threatened all sorts of cruelty against the English clergy, in return. The Pope fulfilled his threat, but John still sullenly defied him, and went on in his cruel ways, taxing the people heavily for useless wars.

He had more success at home, for he crushed an outbreak against him in Wales, and also a rising of the nobles in Ireland, which the English King now claimed as part of his kingdom. Then he also went to Scotland, and met King William at Norham Castle, where he got him to pay a large sum of money for securing the rights and privileges which his brother Richard had restored to him.

All this time, the poor people of England were in a miserable condition. Not only were there heavy taxes and bad order, but, through the Pope's decree, the churches were all closed. The church-bells no longer rang to call the people to prayer, for the doors were shut against all but the monks. They could get no Christian burial for their dead, who often lay unburied,

and marriages had to be performed in churchyards, while the people were deprived of nearly all the innocent pleasures of their lives. The King, angry with every one but himself, gave way to open wickedness of all sorts, oppressing many people, and torturing the Jews to get their money.

One story will show what the nation in general had to suffer. As the King was always in dread of the rebellion of his barons, he ordered them to put into his hands their children or near relatives, as hostages for their loyalty. One day some of his messengers came to the castle of a great baron, William de Braouse, with orders that he should give up his only son to his care. The Baron's wife at once declared that she would never trust her son into the hands of a man who murdered his own nephew. The Baron, knowing how angry the King would be, escaped into Ireland with his wife and son. But the King pursued them and found out their hiding-place. The Baron fled to France, but his wife and son were seized by the King, who is said to have starved them to death in a prison. Such things as this could hardly be long borne by a large and strong body of men like the English barons, and they soon resolved to make a stand.

When the Pope saw that John did not intend to obey him, he declared him expelled from the Church, and deprived of his kingdom, which he asked Philip of France to come and take for himself. Philip was quite ready to do so, and collected a great army, with seventeen hundred ships, to carry it to England. Of course John also called out a large army of Englishmen to defend their country, but he knew that many of the barons hated him so much that they were ready to

go over to the enemy rather than submit to *him*. He felt himself in a desperate plight, and at last agreed to obey the Pope, if he would take back the leave he had given to Philip to take England. But before the Pope would do this, he required that John should give up the kingdom to him, and get it back only on promise of future obedience. All this he did, kneeling humbly before the Pope's messenger, and professing to give to him a kingdom which was not his to give.

King Philip had no idea of forsaking an enterprise which had already cost him so much, and persisted in trying to carry it out. But the English fleet took or destroyed so many of his ships, that he had not enough left to carry his troops, so he burned the rest, lest they also should be taken. John, in his turn, wished to invade France, but his barons would have nothing to do with this, and he was forced to give it up.

The King was now obliged to receive the new Archbishop of Canterbury, whom the Pope had appointed ; and Stephen Langton soon arrived at Winchester, bringing with him some bishops whom John had banished. The King went to meet them, threw himself on the ground before the Archbishop or " Primate," and entreated him to have compassion on England. Langton at once led John into the Chapter-House, where he made him promise, not only to obey the Pope, but also to govern his people justly, accordingly to the good old laws of the Saxon kings. John promised this readily enough, but he did not then know he was to be held to it, both by the Primate and the barons.

The Archbishop soon saw the disorder of the kingdom, and being himself an Englishman, and a lover of his country, he wanted to help the barons to secure

better laws. This was the reason why he had made the King swear to rule by the old Saxon customs. Then he found, in a monastery, a copy of the Charter or Promise which had been given by Henry the First. He showed this first, privately, to a few of the barons in London, who called a great meeting of nearly all of them. When Langton again showed them the Charter, and exhorted them to insist that it should be kept, so that they and their children should be freed from the bondage they endured, the barons swore solemnly, on the high altar, that they would uphold their rights ; and agreed that, after Christmas, they would beg the King to grant these. In the meantime, they could collect men and arms to compel the King to do so, in case he should refuse.

When the barons made their request that the King would renew Henry's Charter, he was afraid to refuse. But he would not give them a positive answer, promising to do this at Easter. Then the barons mustered a large army, with which they marched to the neighbourhood of Oxford, where the King was staying. He sent a message to them by the old Earl of Pembroke, son-in-law of him of whom we have heard as " Strongbow," to ask what the liberties might be which they so greatly desired. When he read over the list they sent, he burst into a furious passion, and inquired why they did not ask for his kingdom, too ; for he would never submit to be their slave !

The barons at once rose in open war, and besieged the King for fifteen days in Nottingham Castle, without taking it. Then, having taken Bedford Castle, they went on to London, which opened its gates to receive them. Exeter and Lincoln did the same. The

barons of the North hastened to join the rest, and Scotland and Wales sent promises of help. The King found himself alone before an angry nation, with only seven knights at his back. He knew it was of no use to resist, so he called the barons to a great meeting.

There is a small island in the Thames, not far from Windsor, where there is a marshy meadow still called Runnymede. Here the barons assembled, with the King's camp, on the shore opposite; and ever since, the place has been famous as the spot where the liberties of England, lost at Senlac, were at last found. For from this time the rights then secured continued to be the foundation-stone of the British Empire. There were a number of rules, but the three great rights insisted upon were these—that no free man should be forced to do anything except by just laws; that justice should not be bought or sold—that is, that people should not have to pay for righteous judgment—and that no taxes should be set upon the people except by the “common council of the realm.” This “council” made the beginning of our British Parliament.

The Charter was carefully written out on a large sheet of parchment, from which it got the Latin name of “*Magna Charta*,” under which it has been famous ever since. A copy of it is carefully kept in the British Museum in London. The King's seal still hangs from the brown shrivelled parchment, at which Englishmen look with reverence, when they think of the long struggle which it cost to secure our British laws and liberties. The King signed it, because he could not help it, but he had no idea of keeping its promises. When he found that twenty-five barons were appointed

to see it observed, he exclaimed, angrily, " They have given me five-and-twenty over-kings ! " Then he threw himself on the ground, and began, in his rage, to chew the sticks and straws that lay about him.

The barons were satisfied now that they had got back their good laws ; but they had to find out that it was not so easy to get them observed. They disbanded their troops, and went home, trusting that all would be well. John, full of schemes, departed sullenly from Windsor, to bide his time in the Isle of Wight, or in Southampton, where the rugged walls and arches of his old palace may still be seen. He had asked the Pope to help him against the barons, and had sent for an army of foreign soldiers, for whom he was waiting by the sea. In the autumn great numbers arrived, and at the same time came a letter from the Pope, full of threats against the English people, who had not asked his consent to their Charter. This time they did not mind his threats, and kept their church-bells ringing all the same. But Archbishop Langton had to go to Rome, and stay there some years, until the Pope forgave him.

As soon as the King had got his hired soldiers together, he marched against the barons, who were not then prepared to fight. He took this army through England, to ravage the country, and burn towns and castles ; and the old times of plunder and destruction seemed to have come again. Many of the Norman barons fled into Scotland, with their wives and families, to seek protection from its young King, Alexander. At last the barons, in despair, asked Philip of France to come to their aid, offering to receive as their king his son Louis, whose wife, Blanche of Castile, was a

granddaughter of Henry II. He was most willing to come on these terms, and once more a foreign force landed in Kent. Dover Castle held out against him, under the brave Hubert de Burgh, but the hired soldiers from Flanders would not fight against the French, and they soon deserted John. But his wicked life and reign were suddenly cut short. As he foolishly insisted on taking his army across "the Wash," at Lincoln, when the tide was due, it came upon them suddenly ; and, though he escaped with his life, his baggage, with all his treasures, was swept away. This trouble brought on a fever, which was aggravated by his own gluttony, at an abbey bearing the curious name of Swineshead. He was taken to Newark Castle, where death closed his evil and unhappy reign of seventeen years. England breathed more freely, when the news spread through it that John was dead.

CHAPTER XVIII

HENRY THE THIRD AND EARL SIMON

1217-1265

YOUNG Prince Henry, King John's elder son, was but nine years old at the time of his father's death and the leaders of the nation felt that they had no quarrel with the child. But it was hardly to be expected that he could be a very good King, and his long reign of fifty-six years, longer than those of any English monarch, except Queen Victoria and George the Third, was not one of much happiness to his people.

Still there were some great events in it which we should keep in memory. One of these was the rebuilding of Westminster Abbey in its present grandeur. Another was—that many of the people were being better taught. Teachers from other countries were coming into the kingdom, and the schools of Oxford were growing into a great university, where clever young lads were well instructed. Among these was the great Roger Bacon, one of the wisest men of his time.

Another thing to be remembered was—that during this reign—the good laws of the Great Charter became established in England. But this was done only after a long struggle, led by another noble patriot, Simon de Montfort, of whose deeds we shall presently hear.

Young Prince Henry had none of the cruelty, falsehood and open wickedness of his father. He seemed, at first, mild and gentle in temper, fond of poetry and beautiful things, and yielding in disposition. But he was changeable and hasty, and did not control either his temper or his tongue; and while really witty, he was often reckless and insolent. One of his great faults was his extravagance, which kept him always in need of money, and this at last made him almost as unjust as his father had been, in forcing it from his people. For he, too, thought that a king should be able to rule his kingdom as he pleased, instead of keeping the good laws, to which the people themselves had agreed.

At first, while Henry was very young, the kingdom was governed by the brave old soldier William Marshal of England and Earl of Pembroke, who took charge of the boy king, and, in his name, proclaimed the Great Charter, against which his father had so fiercely fought. Then the barons deserted Prince Louis of France, whom they had begun to distrust. After a great defeat of his army, he agreed to leave England on promise of a sum of money, and of the safety of his English allies.

As London had been in the hands of the French, when John died, Henry had been hastily crowned at Gloucester when he was twelve years old. He was crowned a second time in great state, by Archbishop Stephen Langton, who had just returned from Rome; and, on the day before this ceremony, he laid the foundation of a large part of the grand new church at Westminster.

The character of Henry III in many ways resembled that of Edward the Confessor. Both were weak, and

easily led by others. Both were devoted to French favourites and French ways, and both loved church services and church building. And now, during Henry's reign, the old church of Edward gradually disappeared, and there arose in its place the beautiful abbey-church of Westminster, which has been called the "most lovely and lovable thing in Christendom." Henry, as has been said, was very free in spending money, and spared none on the building. He took help from all quarters, even from the lands of other abbeys. It was an age of the building of beautiful churches, and he was determined that none should excel it. Foreign painters and sculptors used all their skill to adorn it, while mosaics and other beautiful things were brought from Rome for its decoration. The tomb of Edward the Confessor was as splendid as the work of that age could make it, and shortly before the death of Henry, the new church was consecrated, and the Confessor's remains were placed with great pomp in the shrine now called by his name.

But all this cost a great deal of money, and this in time led to serious consequences. The people of England had been often heavily taxed, during the reign of John, and we have seen that the Great Charter declared that there should be no taxes ordered without the consent of the Great Council of the realm. But though the Charter had been twice proclaimed, this part of it had been left out, in the absence of Stephen Langton. On his return he insisted on a new setting forth of the Charter, to which Henry at last agreed and thereby it thus became fully understood that the King could not expect money from the people so long as he permitted wrong government.

But it was one thing to proclaim a good law, and another to have it put in force. The Barons were very much divided among themselves, and some of them were very rough and lawless. When Archbishop Langton died, there was no one to take his place, though brave Hubert de Burgh—now “Justiciar” or regent—did his best to preserve law and order. But the King took things into his own hands, and not only taxed the people himself, but allowed the Pope to tax the clergy. Discontent grew, and riots began. To add to the troubles, the King, who wanted to get back some of his family’s old possessions in France, quarrelled with Hubert de Burgh, because he opposed the spending of money and life for such an end, and ordered him to be put in fetters. But as Hubert had refused to kill young Prince Arthur at John’s command, so the brave smith who was ordered to fether Hubert, refused to obey Henry. “I will die any death,” he said, “before I will put iron on the man who freed England from the stranger, and saved Dover from France.” The smith had his way, but Hubert was imprisoned for a time in the Tower, and never again had any power in the kingdom.

Henry was still determined to rule as he pleased, and to try to get back the French provinces his father had lost. He married Eleanor of Provence, and many of her relations and friends followed her to England, where other foreigners from Brittany and Poitou had already been put into high offices in England. It was very much as it had been in the days of Edward the Confessor, when the Normans began to come into England. But this time there was no Earl Godwin to help the people. The son of the Earl of Pembroke, the



SIMON DE MONTFORT.

King's brother-in-law, did make a stand against the strangers, but was killed in a skirmish in Ireland. A good clergyman, Edmund Rich, who now became Archbishop of Canterbury, did what he could to make things better, but without much avail. The King went on pressing for money, carrying on his plans against France, and disputing with the barons about the Charter.

But at last there arose a champion of freedom such as Britain has so often found in time of need. This was Earl Simon de Montfort, the son of a French father, who was Earl of Leicester through his English mother. He had become the brother-in-law of the King by marrying his sister, the widow of the young Earl of Pembroke. He was a man of blameless life and stainless truth and honour, who fought long and bravely and steadily for the liberties of England, and well fulfilled his own motto : "*Keep Troth.*" He loved to study the Bible, and was as regular in church-going as the King himself. He had a pleasant, cheerful disposition, but was apt to be hasty and impatient when his plans were crossed. He knew this weakness, and followed the advice of some of his good friends, in training himself to be patient, which was no easy matter at such a time. For things seemed going from bad to worse ! The King, though seeming to agree to the Charter, would not keep it, but went on planning costly enterprises, for which he expected the people to pay. Most of the barons had their own interests to serve, and very few of them were willing to give up any of these for their country's good. Still they felt they could not let misrule go on. After the country had been suffering from a great famine, the King asked for

more money, in order to make his second son Edmund King of Sicily, and then they all thought they *must* make a stand against it.

The King called a great council at London to demand the money he wanted. The barons, headed by Montfort and the Earl of Gloucester, appeared in Westminster Hall, fully armed. The King was startled by their appearance, and asked whether they intended to make him their prisoner. The Earl replied that they were willing to grant what he asked, but that, in return, they expected him to keep the promise he had so often made. The King saw that he must give way, and at another great Council at Oxford, twenty-four barons were appointed to make some rules for the proper government of the kingdom. Of these Montfort was the chief, and the rules they made, called the "Provisions of Oxford," opened the way for our present Parliament. The rule was that there should be a Council or Parliament held three times a year, and that "twelve honest men" should each time be chosen by the people, to attend to the needs of the King and the country. These rules (or laws) were proclaimed in English—then a new thing in England—and no one found fault, except the King's foreign friends, who were so hated by the people that they were obliged to leave the country. Henry's eldest son, young Prince Edward, also swore to observe these laws, and though Edward took this oath against his will, he showed afterwards that he meant to keep it, and helped Montfort to put the laws in force, though his father openly disregarded them.

But Earl Simon was deserted by some of his friends, and, finding that he could make little further headway,

he went to live for a time in France. Soon the people's discontent grew so fast that the barons were glad to get him back as their head. Young Prince Edward was fighting in Wales with an army, which the Barons feared might be turned against them, but Earl Simon collected a large force to oppose it. The citizens of London opened their gates to him, and the people flocked to his standard. And though most of the nobles now aided the King, he felt that his throne—or perhaps his life—was in danger. Both sides at last agreed to refer the dispute to the good King Louis IX of France, often called Saint Louis.

But the French King could hardly understand how the English people prized their liberties, and he refused to agree to the laws made at Oxford, though he said that the rights given by the Great Charter ought to stand. Neither Earl Simon nor the citizens of London would accept this strange decision. Then the bell of St. Paul's rang out, and the people mustered for the contest. One baron after another deserted Earl Simon, the royal army took possession of Northampton, and Prince Edward nearly took London by surprise. Earl Simon alone stood by the cause "like a pillar," and declared that "he and his sons would fight to the end, even if they were left to fight alone." Once more Earl Simon offered the King peace, and payment for all damage done, if he would promise to observe the Oxford rules. Henry refused with defiance, and then Earl Simon, though outnumbered, determined to fight for the rights of the English people. At dawn began the famous battle of Lewes. Montfort and his men, wearing white crosses on back and breast, knelt in prayer before it began. Prince Edward attacked the

Londoners, whom he scattered and pursued, killing three thousand of his father's subjects. But he returned, to find the battle lost, and to become, with his father and uncle, prisoners of Earl Simon. This battle gave the victory to English freemen, and in a song written about it, the truth is declared that "he only is a free King who rightly rules himself and his realm." Perhaps Prince Edward profited by the lesson!

King Henry now felt himself in the power of Earl Simon, and agreed to do what he asked. Four knights from each county of England were called together, with the bishops, to provide for the good government of the kingdom. But the barons were falling away from the cause they had been fighting for. In January 1265, when a Parliament was to meet at Westminster, only a small number of knights could be found who would answer the summons. Then a great idea came to Earl Simon. He saw clearly that the whole people, as well as the clergy and barons, should have a voice in the government of a free England. So he summoned only two knights from each county, but also called two citizens from every city and borough to sit with them in Parliament. This made the beginning of the House of Commons, and changed the nature of our government from that day to this.

The Parliament of January, 1265, was the first complete Parliament or Council of Britain. There, beside the clergy in their robes, and the barons and knights, with swords buckled at their sides, sat the quiet, peaceable merchants and traders in their plain every-day dress. The time had not yet come when they were to sit, with the knights of the shire, in a place by them-

selves, as they do now, in our British House of Commons. But from this Parliament we may almost say that modern England begins.

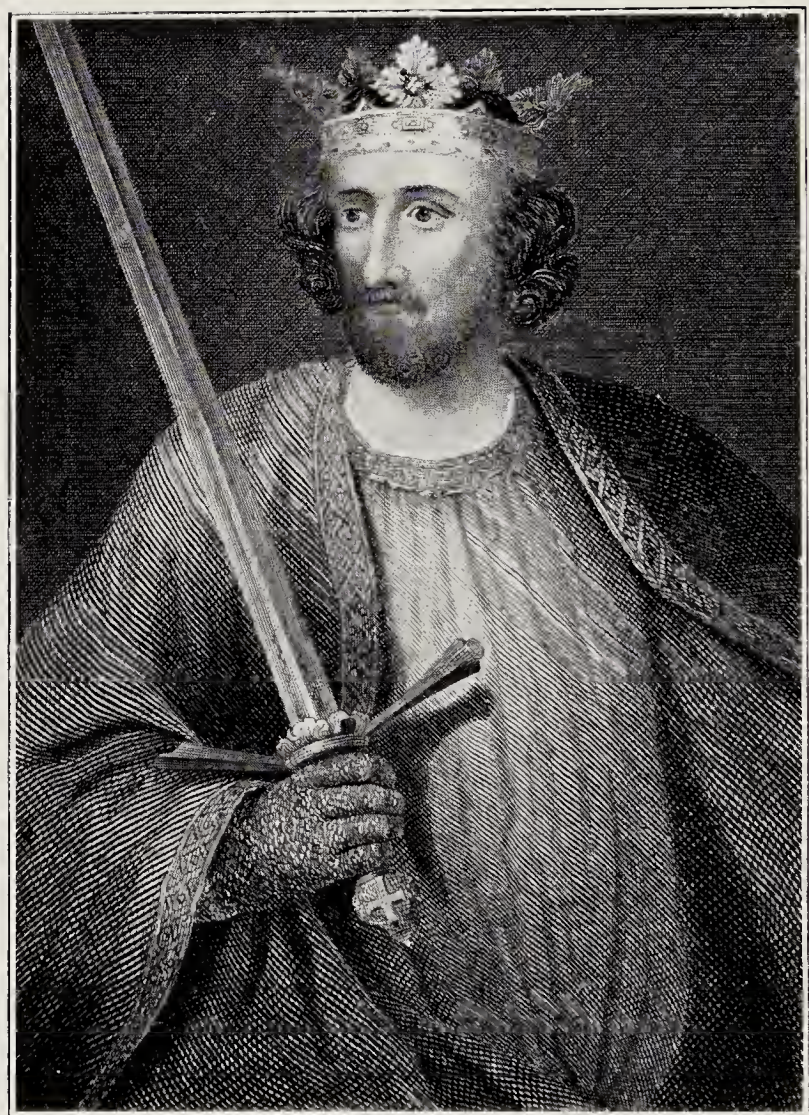
Though Earl Simon had thus laid the foundation of English liberty, he was not to live to see it built up. Some of his allies among the barons left him, offended because they thought him proud and overbearing, and some because he would not allow things he thought wrong. Many of the people began to feel sorry for the captive King and Prince, and wanted to set them free. But Earl Simon saw the danger of this, and took them with him wherever he went. The young Earl of Gloucester was now opposing Earl Simon with an armed force near Wales, and helped Prince Edward to escape from the knights who guarded him. He was eager to fight Earl Simon at once, and set his father free, so he joined Gloucester with an army raised by the Barons of that neighbourhood. To them he solemnly promised that if he gained the victory, he would keep the promises his father had made and broken.

Then he hastened to overtake Earl Simon, who was marching with his troops along the river Severn. The Earl had not a large enough force to meet that of the Prince, and sent for his son Simon to come to help him. But as young Simon was hastening with his troops to his father, he was surprised by his cousin Edward at Kenilworth. Many of his men were killed, and he and the rest were driven to take refuge in that famous old castle. While this was happening, Earl Simon crossed the Severn, having got more troops from Llewelyn of Wales, and hoping soon to meet his son, and join forces. Edward, hearing this, hurried to overtake him. Young Simon then hastened, with

the men he had left, to join his father. Earl Simon reached a place called Evesham, after a long night march, on the morning of August 4, 1265, while his son had reached Alcester, only ten miles away. Both forces had to stop for rest and food, and the delay was fatal to both.

As the morning broke, Prince Edward's army faced Montfort's men across the road which stretched between him and his son, while escape from the rear was cut-off. Earl Simon at first thought that the approaching troops were those of his son. When he saw who it was, and how orderly was their array he exclaimed, "They come on in wise fashion, but it was from me they learned it!" He saw at once that there was no hope for him or his men, and said to the friends about him—"May God have mercy on our souls, for our bodies are Prince Edward's!"

Knowing that his few horsemen and his untrained Welshmen could do little against an army of trained knights, he urged some of his comrades to leave him and save themselves. But they said that, if he died, they had no wish to live. The Welsh soon gave way, and were slain without mercy as they fled. Earl Simon and his knights fought bravely, and fell, one by one, until the Earl was left alone, still refusing to yield, even when unhorsed. But a sword-thrust from behind at last brought him to the ground. With a last cry "It is God's grace!" the brave and steadfast Earl passed away—one of the many noble men who, during the long past, have laid down their lives for England and her freedom.



EDWARD I.

From an ancient statue at Carnarvon Castle.

CHAPTER XIX

EDWARD THE FIRST AND ROBERT BRUCE

1265-1314

WHEN Henry the Third died, seven years after the battle of Evesham, the English people were glad to have such a King as brave Prince Edward. He was tall, strong and handsome, and had the golden hair of the Saxons in youth, though it grew dark in later life. He had many fine qualities, for he was brave, firm, shrewd, temperate, laborious, and most affectionate to his own family and friends. He seemed heart-broken by the death of his first wife, and as her bier had to be carried a long way, from Lincoln to Westminster Abbey, he set up crosses wherever the bearers stopped to rest. The last place is now the railway station of Charing Cross, "Charing" standing for "Dear Queen" in French.

But he was not always just and merciful like King Alfred, and did not always "keep troth," like Earl Simon, though he, too, chose that for his motto. He was obstinate, stern and severe, often rough in speech, and harsh and revengeful in act. He was fond of war, for which he made his people pay heavily, and was more eager for power and greatness for himself, than he was for the good of his people. And this brought much misery to his subjects and to many other

people. Prince Edward was in Palestine with his young wife, Eleanor of Castile, when his father died, and his eldest son was born and died there. Edward is said to have shown more sorrow for the death of his father than for that of his little son, saying that he might yet have more children, but could never have another father. And this the English people liked to hear.

The young King—as he was now—immediately set out for England, but stayed for a time in France on his way back, and did homage to the French King for the lands he still held there. He and his knights tried some sham fighting with the French knights, and their skill in arms made the others so angry that it ended in what was almost a real battle, so that he only saved his life by his skill in fighting. As soon as he reached London he was crowned at Westminster Abbey with great rejoicing. He had learned much from his father's experience, and seemed willing to keep the promises he had made to rule by the rules of the Great Charter, though sometimes he tried to force money from his people against their will. We have seen that the Jews were often cruelly treated in the time of King John, but Edward drove out of his kingdom fifteen thousand of them, taking all their money, except just enough to carry them to some foreign country. He also took from the clergy a great deal of their property, and was very angry at their resistance. He made some good laws, ruled his kingdom firmly and tried to put down robberies. But unjust and cruel things were also done, and it was thirty years before he summoned the knights and citizens to come and sit in Parliament according to Earl Simon's plan.

Wales was at that time a separate country from England, and many of the old Britons had lived there, under their own princes, for several hundred years. Edward insisted that their prince Llewellyn should pay him tribute, as had been for some time customary, but Llewellyn, who was proud and brave, refused to do this. He was about to be married to Elinor de Montfort, a daughter of Earl Simon, and as she was coming in a ship from France, Edward got hold of her and kept her prisoner. Then he raised an army, and drove Llewellyn and his men to take refuge among the Welsh mountains, where they were starved into surrender, and Llewellyn had to submit to Edward as his master, and then got back his captive bride.

But the English barons who lived on the Welsh border were very cruel and insolent to the conquered Welsh, who hated their bondage ; and Llewellyn was persuaded by his brother, Prince David, to fight again. Edward brought a large army into Wales, where Llewellyn tried to defend himself among his mountains, but fell in battle, fighting bravely with two thousand of his men. Prince David was pursued from hill to hill, till he was taken prisoner and cruelly put to death by Edward as a traitor. Then King Edward made his little son Alfonso hang up, in Westminster Abbey, the golden crown of Llewellyn, and it is noted that this little prince died almost immediately after that, and was buried near the spot. It is also told that Edward and his Queen were at Carnarvon Castle in Wales, when his next son was born. The King called the people together, and to'd them that he wou'd give them a prince with whom they could find no fault, for he was born in Wales, and could not speak English. This

pleased them very much, but they must have been surprised when he brought out the baby prince, and told them that *this* was the "Prince of Wales!" and this, as we all know, has been the usual title of the King's eldest son, ever since.

At this time England and Scotland were on terms of great peace and friendship; for Alexander the Third, then King of Scotland, had married the sister of King Edward, and they came to visit Edward at Windsor or Westminster, with much pomp and splendour. They had three children, but their two sons died young, and their daughter Margaret was sent to Norway to be married to its young King Eric. Within a few years the young Queen of Norway died, leaving a baby daughter, who was now the only heir to the Scottish crown. King Alexander, whose Queen died before his daughter, was killed by falling with his horse over a cliff, while riding in the dark. So the little Margaret, about three years old, became Queen of Scotland.

King Edward saw that he had now an opportunity to be master over all Britain. We have seen already how a Scottish King, "William the Lion," had been trapped into doing homage to Henry as his "overlord," and how Richard Lion-heart let King David buy back his right over his kingdom. King Alexander, even when a boy, had been careful to show that he did homage only for the part of England which he ruled and that he held Scotland itself as a free and independent country.

King Edward at once proposed a marriage between his son Edward and his royal grandniece. Some of the Scottish nobles were trying to get the crown for themselves, and Edward was asked to help to keep the

peace. An agreement was made for the future marriage, by which it was agreed that the rights and liberties of Scotland should be held sacred as they had been before. Edward swore to observe this, but almost immediately set an English governor over Scotland, and asked that its castles should be given up to him, which the Scots refused to allow.

But soon there came a sad surprise. The little Queen Margaret had sailed from Norway for Scotland, but was taken ill on the way, and died at the Orkney Isles. There was great sorrow in Scotland, and as several nobles claimed the crown, the English King was asked to decide which of these should be King of Scotland. Edward told his barons at once that he meant to subdue Scotland as he had done Wales, and called them to Norham Castle, on the border, where he met the Scottish Parliament, and ordered them to submit to him as "over-lord" of Scotland.

The Scottish nobles were taken by surprise, and did not know what to say. The King reminded them that he had an army at his back, ready to put down all resistance. The Scots asked for delay, and the King gave them three weeks. At the end of that time the Parliament submitted to his will, and twelve nobles claimed the crown. From the two whose claim he thought the best—John Baliol and Robert Bruce—Edward chose Baliol as King. But he also said that he should assert his own rights as supreme lord, and warned Baliol to take care not to disobey him.

Poor King John Baliol was soon made to feel his bondage, for Edward called him to Westminster whenever any dispute turned up. Baliol was a mild and patient man, but even *his* patience could not stand

Edward's demands. When, at last, he did come before the English Parliament, he said, very rightly, that as he was King of Scotland, he dared not answer for his kingdom without the consent of his people. King Edward rudely replied—"What means this refusal? Are you not my liegeman? Is it not my summons that brings you here?"

But Baliol was firm, and the English King and Parliament had to agree to his request for delay. Soon after this, Edward himself received from the King of France the same sort of treatment which he was giving to Baliol. There had been a fight between some English and French ships, and Philip called Edward, as his vassal, to answer for what the English seamen had done. When Edward took no notice of this, Philip claimed his French provinces for his disobedience, But Edward declared war against France, and ordered Baliol and the Scottish nobles to come to his help. Instead, they called a Parliament at Scone, and determined to follow Edward's example, by declaring war against *him*, and driving away some Englishmen who had been set over them.

Edward was too busy in his war with France to do more than foster the strife between the Scottish nobles. He told Bruce, whose lands in Annandale had been taken from him, that he was very sorry for having made Baliol king, and that he intended to put him in his place. The Scottish barons hid Baliol away in a mountain fortress, made an alliance with France, and sent an army into England, which returned without doing much harm.

As soon as Edward was free to attack Scotland, he marched to the border with a large army, and took the

town of Berwick by storm. Fifteen thousand of the people, men, women and children, were killed there ; for two days the streets ran with blood, and the churches were turned into stables for the English horses. One brave and faithful deed deserves to be told here. The merchants of Flanders, who kept up a flourishing trade with Scotland, occupied a large strong building called the Red Hall, which they were bound, by promise, to defend to the last. They would not surrender, even to save their lives, and thirty of them held it against the whole English army till it was set on fire, and they perished in the ruins. That Good Friday was a sad one for the Scots, and the beginning of a terrible time of misery for all that part of Britain.

The Scottish nobles were enraged by the cruel massacre at Berwick, and in their turn made a destructive raid into England, while Edward took the castles of Dunbar and Roxburgh and held a triumphant festival at Perth. Then he summoned Baliol to the castle of Brechin, there to beg humbly for Edward's pardon, and to give up his kingdom and its great Seal into the hands of the English King ; after which he was sent, with his eldest son, to the Tower of London, where he was kept prisoner for three years. Edward continued his journey through Scotland, subduing the barons and people wherever he went. He carried off some of the nation's most precious treasures, the old Scottish sceptre and crown, and the Coronation Stone, which was placed in the ancient chair in Westminster Abbey, on which are now crowned the rightful monarchs of United Britain.

The son of the first Robert Bruce had reminded Edward of the promise he had made ; but the King

only replied angrily—"Have I nothing to do but to conquer kingdoms for you?" He however employed him and his son Robert to receive the submission of the people on their estates, which had been now returned to them. He little foresaw, in this young Robert Bruce, the future hero who was to make Scotland once more free! There was small spirit or hope left there now, for the great barons seemed to have given up the game. But there was still a large part of the nation that hated the English rule. Bands of outlaws and armed peasants roamed through the country, plundering and ravaging the lands of the English strangers who had been forced upon them, just as the Normans had once been forced upon the English.

But there arose, in this extremity, Scotland's great hero, Sir William Wallace. This gallant knight is said to have been a giant in height, with long fair hair, strong in body, and brave and fearless in spirit. He loved his country with all his heart and hated its English oppressors. An English soldier insulted him in the streets of Lanark, and a scuffle followed, in which one man was killed. Wallace escaped only through the help of a friend, who was afterwards put to death for sheltering him. He was proclaimed a traitor, and driven to seek refuge in the wilds, where he became chief of a band of outlaws, like Hereward the Wake, in the days of William the Conqueror. His gallant exploits soon drew to him a large body of men, and among them some of the nobles, though many were held back through fear of Edward or jealousy of Wallace.

As Edward was now fighting in France, his general—the Earl of Surrey—took the field against Wallace,

now followed by a large Scottish army. Though this was not so large as that of Surrey, Wallace fought and won the battle of Stirling. Before the battle, Surrey sent two friars to propose terms of peace, but Wallace refused to consider them. "Tell your friends," he said, "that we came here with no peaceful intent, but to set our country free!" The battle was bravely fought on both sides, but Wallace had chosen his ground so well, and guided his men so skilfully, that half of Surrey's army fell on the field, and Scotland could lift up its head again. Wallace was now a great leader, with a large and powerful following, and was soon elected Governor of Scotland in the name of Baliol. But though he ruled well and firmly, the great nobles were still jealous of his power, though the rest of the nation rallied heartily to the banner of the brave man who thought only of the freedom of his country.

Edward was greatly enraged, and as soon as he could get back from France he hastened to avenge what he called the "rebellion" of the Scottish people. It was at this time that, in order to get his barons to fight, he had to call the ordinary citizens, or "Commons," to his Parliament, and to make fresh promises to observe the Charter. So we see how the freemen of Scotland, fighting for their country, helped the freemen of England to stand for their rights.

Then the King, with about ninety thousand men, began what turned out to be a seven years' war with Scotland. Wallace knew that the Scots could not meet such an army on the field, but, by driving away all supplies, he thought that his men could hold out until the English had to retreat for want of food. But the secret treachery of two Scottish Earls gave

Edward notice of an attack that Wallace intended to make on the retreating English. The King and his army slept on the ground in their armour that night, and before dawn they marched to meet the Scots near Falkirk.

As the Scottish army was a great deal smaller than the English one, Wallace would have retreated, if there had been time. As it was, he set his little army in much the same kind of battle array that Harold used at Senlac. The men stood close together in squares,—the outer rank kneeling—with lances turned outwards, while bow-men occupied the centre and horsemen the rear. Even Edward hesitated to lead his tired army on in face of so compact an array. The battle was long and fierce, but the Scots were deserted by the whole body of their cavalry, and then the odds were too great. Wallace had to retreat, leaving fifteen thousand of his brave men dead on the field. The Scottish force burned Stirling and Perth, because they could not defend them, and Edward found only one house left where he could rest after a hurt received from his horse, during the night. After ravaging the county of Fife, and taking some castles, he was forced, for want of supplies, to return to Carlisle. Soon after the battle of Falkirk Wallace resigned his high office, knowing that some of the nobles were his enemies, and thinking that, as Scotland was roused to defend herself, *his* work was done. Then he retired, with his band of outlaws, to the woods and mountains, striking a blow for freedom whenever he could.

In the year 1300 Edward again invaded Scotland. Two Scottish nobles came to try to make peace with him, but as they insisted on having their own king,

Edward refused, and they departed in anger. At this time King Philip of France and the Pope both begged that Baliol might be set free, and he was at last sent to live in France till his death. The Pope also persuaded Edward to grant a truce to the Scots, but he and his Parliament would not consent to let Scotland alone altogether.

After a time Edward again marched through Scotland with a great army, plundering and destroying towns, villages, woods and farms, wherever he went. Only two castles resisted him. One of these was Brechin Castle, commanded by Sir Thomas Maule, who fought to the death. At Dunfermline, where Queen Margaret had won the people by her gracious ways, her descendant Edward compelled the unwilling barons to submit. He also destroyed her fine Abbey, leaving only the church. Its noble hall, in which the Scottish Parliament had often met, was razed to the ground. The castle of Stirling, which also defended itself with a small garrison, was taken at last, and its brave knights and gentlemen were compelled to beg for their lives on their knees, with ropes around their necks. Wallace was the only man in Scotland who stood out against Edward, and at one time he came to Dunfermline at the desire of his friends, and agreed to surrender himself on certain terms. But these were such as Edward would never grant to the man who so bravely resisted him, and whom he was determined to hunt down. At last, seven years after the battle of Falkirk, the brave hero was basely betrayed into the hands of Edward, who put him to a cruel death. Six months after that, Scotland was again fighting for freedom.

Young Robert Bruce, the grandson of the Bruce who claimed the crown of Scotland, was now a young man of twenty-three. His father had never taken part in the struggle with Edward, as he was anxious to save his large estates in England, but young Robert had been drawn by the noble example of Wallace to the cause of Scottish freedom. At first he did not come out openly, and in order to avoid suspicion he even swore at Carlisle to help Edward against the Scots. This was very wrong, for he did not intend to keep his promise. He did not fight at Falkirk, and managed for a time to stand well in the favour of Edward. His old rival, John Comyn, also thought he had a right to the crown, and Bruce found out that Comyn, while pretending to be his friend, had told the King of his plans to free his country and become its King. Just after this, he met Comyn at Dumfries, and in the course of an angry dispute, accused him of treachery. "You lie," said Comyn, and Bruce, in a passion, drew his dagger and stabbed him. Then realizing what he had done, he rushed out and rode for his life.

It was strange that Bruce, who had been so cautious and prudent, should have been led by passion into so rash a deed. But now he could hesitate no longer. He knew that Edward would regard him as a traitor and a murderer, and he must either become an outlaw or claim the crown. He chose the latter, and—with a small attendance of barons and bishops—he was crowned at Scone Abbey. On the road he and his train met a young man in armour, who knelt and did homage to Bruce as his King. This was Sir James Douglas, whose father had fought with Wallace, and who became a faithful friend of Bruce, and a famous leader

of the Scottish people. The new King soon gathered more followers and boldly seized castles and towns, raising such a panic among the English strangers, that many of them fled at once. But all the friends of the Comyns were his bitter enemies, and for a long time his following was but small.

King Edward was now growing old, and was already so infirm that he could no longer lead his armies on horseback. He was furious on hearing that, after twenty years of warfare, the Scots had again a King of their own, and that King a young man whom he himself had trusted. He not only at once sent troops to Scotland, but he also did a very strange thing.

His son, Prince Edward, was just at this time knighted, and three hundred young English gentlemen also received this honour at the same time from the young prince, as soon as he had got from his father his belt and spurs. There was so great a crowd in Westminster Abbey, that he had to mount the steps of the high altar, from which he knighted the large band of gallant young Englishmen. Then there was a great banquet, at which two swans were placed on the table, covered with a golden network. These birds were held as emblems of truth and constancy, and the King made a solemn vow, on these swans, that he would go to Scotland to punish the murderer of Comyn and the boldness of the Scots, and that he would then set out on a Crusade, so that he might die in Palestine. He also made his son promise, in case he should die before doing this, to carry his body to Scotland, and not to bury it until he had conquered the Scots. The King then sent the Prince on before him, who ravaged the

country, sparing neither young nor old, so that his cruelty shocked even the stern King.

Robert Bruce, with his small following, could do but little against the great English army, and as a high price was set on his head, he had to seek shelter among the Scottish hills. He and his faithful friends wandered about, almost bare-foot, living as they could, by hunting, or the kindness of the people. At length he and his followers came to Aberdeen, where he found his handsome young brother, Sir Nigel Bruce, who had brought to him his faithful wife and some other ladies who wished to share the lot of their husbands or fathers. Hearing that the English were approaching, they had to retreat again into the Highlands, where they wandered about together, living on roots and berries, except when fish was caught or venison killed by young Douglas, who did his best to cheer them all. But this could not last very long, especially as Bruce had a great enemy, the Lord of Lorne, who was determined to kill or take him prisoner. The brave men felt that the ladies should be taken to a place of safety, and they went, guarded by Nigel Bruce and the Earl of Athol, to a strong castle called Kildrummie. All the horses were given up to their party, and Bruce and his three or four friends crossed Loch Lomond in a leaky boat, and found their way through the woods and hills to the coast. Even then Bruce did not feel safe, and went on, with three hundred followers, to the little island of Rathlin, near Ireland, where he remained for some time, securely hidden.

While lodging there in a poor cottage, we are told that, on looking up to the roof, he saw a spider trying to swing itself from one beam to another, at the

end of its long thread. Six times it tried in vain. Bruce began to think that it was like himself, for he had been six times beaten by the English. So he watched to see whether it would try again; for, if it did, he thought so would he. The seventh time it succeeded, and he thought he might take heart to try his fate once more.

As Edward had not succeeded in taking Bruce, he treated most cruelly those of his followers whom he did seize. Even the ladies who had been so faithful to their friends were shut up in prison, and some of them were put in wooden cages, where they were kept away from everybody, and exposed to the weather. Nigel Bruce and other friends of the Scottish King were barbarously put to death as traitors. When spring came, Bruce left his island hiding-place and returned to Scotland, where he was greatly grieved to hear of the fate of his friends. Again his adventures began, and he had many narrow escapes. Once a band of fierce mountaineers met him in a narrow pass; but as he was fully armed and clad in steel, he was able to keep them back by killing each man who attacked him until his friend came to his aid. At another time his enemy Lorne brought a blood-hound which had once been his own, and very nearly tracked his old master out. But he was killed by an arrow, and Bruce escaped. He and his followers at last gained a victory over the English troops at a place called Loudon Hill. But King Edward—though suffering from illness—was as determined as ever to conquer Bruce, and leaving the litter in which he had been carried, he tried to lead his army on horseback. Only six miles farther on, death overtook this mighty King, and he had to leave

his great undertaking to a son quite unlike himself.

Young Edward the Second did none of the things which his father had made him promise. He returned to England, buried his father in Westminster Abbey, and called back a silly favourite who had had so bad an influence over him that his father had banished him from the country. The Earl of Pembroke was left to conduct the war with Scotland, and for a long time it still went on.

At last, six years after Edward's death, Bruce and the 'Scots gained a glorious victory beside a small stream called the *Bannock-burn*, close to Stirling. The English garrison had been besieged there, and had promised to surrender, if their friends did not come to help them at the end of a year. Edward II collected an immense army of more than a hundred thousand men, which he thought the Scots could never resist. But though they had only a small army of thirty thousand men, they were all fighting for their country and their freedom, and a good cause makes good fighting. Bruce showed himself a brave and skilful general, in his preparation for the battle and arrangement of his men. He had many pits dug in the ground between the two armies, and set his men in solid squares. When the battle was about to begin, the whole army knelt in prayer. "See," cried Edward, "they are kneeling—they ask mercy." "They do, my Liege," said his captain,—“but it is from God, not from us. Trust me, yon men will win or die!”

And win they did, and so completely, that half of the English army was left dead or wounded on the field, with all the stores and baggage. Edward saved himself by a hasty flight, and once more Scotland was

free. King Robert Bruce made a good king for Scotland for many years to come, and lived to see his son David married to the sister of Edward the Third.

The struggle through which Scotland had passed had been a hard one ; but in the end, it helped to make it a nation, and the heroic deeds of Wallace and Bruce are still cherished wherever Scottish hearts are found. A stately monument to Wallace overlooks the plain where he won the battle of Stirling ; and the victory of *Bannockburn* still stirs Scottish blood as Marathon did that of the Greeks. On many a battlefield, where English and Scottish soldiers—foes no longer—have fought side by side for the British Empire, the Scotsmen and the English too have taken heart and courage from the noble lines of Scotland's national poet, Burns :—

“Scots, wha hae wi' Wallace bled,
Scots, wham Bruce hath aften led ;
Welcome to your gory bed,
Or to victory !

“Wha for Scotland's king and law
Freedom's sword will strongly draw,
Freeman stand,—or freeman fa',
Let him follow me !”

CHAPTER XX

EDWARD THE BLACK PRINCE

1328-1360

IF there was rejoicing in Scotland, after the Battle of Bannockburn, there was mourning in England. An old writer of history makes a sad lament over the defeat, in which he oddly mixes up the noble barons and spirited young knights, who fell on the field, with the "store of excellent arms and golden vessels and costly vestments" of which "one short and miserable day deprived us." Though it did not end the war, it secured a truce for nineteen years, though when the foolish and incapable Edward II was murdered, in 1317 this truce was broken. But the boy king, Edward III could make no headway against Bruce and his sturdy Scottish troops. In the second year of his reign, 1328, a Parliament met at York, and put an end to the long and weary war, by acknowledging King Robert Bruce as the King of Scotland, and that country as forever a free and independent kingdom. At this time Edward was not yet sixteen years old, and a Welsh baron named Roger de Mortimer, who was a favourite of his mother's, tried at first to rule the kingdom. But when he unjustly beheaded Edward's uncle, the Earl of Kent, the young King succeeded in seizing him and hanging him as a traitor.

Then he tried to bring back good order to the kingdom and made peace with France. But in spite of the treaty that he had made, he again tried to invade Scotland, when his brother-in-law, young King David, began to reign, at eight years old. However Edward had at last to give up this attempt, on account of a new quarrel with France, which was helping Scotland, and this began a "Hundred Years' War" that brought great harm to both countries.

The King of France, Edward's uncle, died, leaving no children, and Edward thought he had more right to be king than his cousin King Philip. But the French people did not wish to be ruled by a King of England, and so there began this long and miserable war, for which the English people were taxed so much that they had hardly enough left to live upon. And the French people had to see their fields trampled down and laid waste, and their towns and villages plundered and burned! The only good thing that the war did, was to make the English more brave and loyal, as well as great fighters at sea: and this trained them to win afterwards many victories for the British Empire.

Edward the Third married a beautiful and clever young princess, called Philippa of Hainault. She took a great interest in building many fine churches, and she also paid for a new College and schools at Oxford. She had a large family and brought them up with great care. Her second son, who was called John of Gaunt, and afterwards became Duke of Lancaster, was a friend of Chaucer, the first great English poet. Of him we shall hear more in another chapter. Queen Philippa also invited a French writer, Sir John Froissart,

to come to see England ; and he wrote many interesting things about the history of that time. It was then that the English nobles and richer people learned to leave off talking Norman-French, and their speech became very like what our English language is now. The lawyers also had to conduct all their business in English, though there still remain some French words in the English law.

The eldest son of King Edward and Queen Philippa was called the Black Prince—probably because he used to wear black armour. He was also called the flower of English knighthood, because he was as brave as a lion, and as generous and as courteous (or gentle-mannered) as he was brave. He became very famous for his victories in France, which was at this time the most powerful nation in Europe.

The first battle between the English and the French was a sea-fight. The English ships often crossed to Flanders, to carry over the wool of the English sheep, which the Flemish weavers made into cloth, a thing very important to England, though many of them were now beginning to settle in Britain. King Edward wished to take over his soldiers to Flanders, and King Philip gathered a much larger fleet of two hundred ships to oppose the English fleet, near a town called Sluys, on the coast. They had no cannon to fire from the ships then, but they had machines for throwing great stones at each other's ships, when near enough, and the bowmen shot their arrows from a distance. The French and English had never before fought at sea in this way, and the English seamen must have fought very bravely to defeat the French, with their larger fleet.

It was in the great battle fought at Crécy (or Cressy), in France, that the Black Prince first showed himself a great general. Shortly before he and his father set out to fight in France, the King founded the "Order of the Blue Garter," at Windsor Castle, which he had rebuilt, and made the chief palace of the English Kings. We see in pictures of Queen Victoria, King Edward, and our present King George—a broad blue riband across their breasts ; and the right to wear it is one of the highest honours an Englishman can possess. There were then twenty-four members, and the name is said to have come from the dropping of a lady's garter, which King Edward politely returned to its owner. Some of the foolish courtiers began to laugh, but the King stopped them by saying "*Honi soit qui mal y pense*" which means "*evil to him who evil thinks*" and is the motto of the Order and also of our British coat-of-Arms. It is a good story, but we do not know whether it is true.

The King led his small army of English and Welsh troops into France, and soon met the French King, with his army, and his allies from Genoa. Edward placed his forces carefully on the slope of a hill, with a windmill on the top of it, from which he could see the whole fight. His army had had a good night's rest, and a good breakfast, before the battle began, about three o'clock on a warm August afternoon. It is said that the English had some artillery, or "small bombards" throwing little iron balls to frighten the horses, and fired with gunpowder, which had just been invented, and was now used for the first time we know of. Probably the French had some too, but, in their haste to fight, they had not brought it with them.

The French King hated the English, and sent the Genoese with their good crossbows, to shoot them. And when he saw them give way before the English charge, he told his men to "kill the scoundrels." But the English bowmen rained their arrows on them, and drove them back. Then the French came fiercely down on the right wing of the army led by the Black Prince, and at one time it seemed as though he were going to lose the day. A messenger was sent to the King, to urge him to send help. He asked whether his son were dead or wounded ; and when the messenger said " no," the King said—" Let the boy win his spurs ; I choose that the day may be his, and the honour with him and those to whom I have given it in charge ! " The Prince won the victory, and the defeat was a sad one for the French. Two kings who had come from other countries to help the French, with one of the French king's brothers, more than a thousand knights, and nearly as many footmen as the whole English army were left dead on the battlefield.

Edward now marched his victorious army to the large town of Calais, opposite Dover, which he wished to take. It was a great harbour, from which many pirate ships used to sail to plunder the English ones, and Edward wished to make it an English town. But the garrison was too strong and brave to surrender, and Edward was forced to besiege it for a whole year. During all this time, he kept the people from getting any food brought into the town, till at last they could find nothing left to eat, and were forced by starvation to yield. They sent an offer to surrender, and Edward was so bitter in his hatred, that at first he said he would hang all the citizens for their brave

defence. But at last he agreed to grant them mercy on condition that six of their best men should give themselves up to be treated as he chose. The townspeople were almost mad with hunger, but when they heard this cruel condition, they began to weep and lament loudly. Then the richest merchant in the town, Eustace St. Pierre, stood up, and offered to be one of the six, and five others soon joined him. They all went out, with ropes round their necks, to take the keys of the town to the King at his camp. The Queen and many knights and nobles were there also, and were surrounded by a great crowd, some of whom cried "hang them all!" and some wept for pity.

Then Master Eustace told the King that they were all merchants of Calais, and that they gave themselves up to him to save the citizens who had suffered so much. But the King's heart was so hard, that he ordered their heads to be cut off. One of his brave knights, Walter de Maunay, begged in vain that he would not do this cruel deed. But he still said that those who had made so many of his men die, must die themselves. Then Queen Philippa fell on her knees before him, weeping, and begged their lives, as the only thing she had asked since she had come with him to France. He stood silent for a time, and then said—"Lady, I would rather you had not been here, but I dare not refuse you, and though I do it against my will, I give them to you!" We can easily imagine how glad the citizens were, and how the gracious Queen made her people bring garments for the brave merchants and "give them good cheer."

King Edward's ships had to fight with a Spanish fleet, after that, and beat it too; but for a long time

the army was not able to do much in France. And what the Black Prince did then brought him no credit. He had no money to pay his troops, so he led them through the beautiful and fertile south of France, where there was no one to oppose him, among quiet, simple people who did not know what war was. These his rough soldiers robbed of nearly all they had, carpets and hangings and jewels, and everything valuable, till the horses were so loaded that they could hardly move. This was not what we should expect from a brave and generous knight; but in those fierce days, warriors seemed to think that they might do what they pleased in an enemy's country.

The next year Prince Edward marched his army to Paris, and met the young King John of France, with an army five times the size of his own. They fought near the town of Poitiers, which this battle has made famous. The Prince arranged the battle as his father had done at Crécy. Both sides fought hard, but the English horsemen by a sudden attack won the day. King John, who fought bravely, was taken prisoner with a great many of his nobles.

When the King of France and his youngest son were brought to the tent of the Black Prince, after the fighting was over, he treated them as kindly as if they had come to pay him an ordinary visit. He made King John sit in his own place, ordered supper to be brought for him, and he himself waited on his guest, and "gave him all the comfort he was able." This was very different from the treatment King Edward wanted to give to the poor citizens of Calais; but it made a great difference that John was a king, and also a cousin of the Prince. In harmony with this act of courtesy

seems the noble motto of the Prince of Wales, "*Ich dien*," I serve; though this, with the device, was taken from *another* King John slain by the Prince at Crécy.

After that, the Black Prince brought King John with him to London, and they rode together through the city—King John on a beautiful white horse with rich trappings, and the Prince of Wales on a small black one by his side. King Edward gave him John of Gaunt's splendid "Savoy" palace to live in and also entertained him at Windsor Castle. After a great deal more of fighting in France, King Edward had to make peace, giving up all his claims to the crown of France and nearly all the lands which the English had held there, including Normandy. This was much better for England, as, in the end, it put a stop to the wars that had been doing both countries so much harm. A heavy ransom was promised for the King of France, who was then set free to return home, where he was received by his people with great joy. But he afterwards came back to England to visit the King and Queen, wishing—it is said—to remove some difficulties connected with the fulfilment of the Treaty. And—though well received and well treated—he died there a few months later.

The Black Prince had kept his old Duchy of Aquitaine, and—a year or two after this—he went to live there, with his wife, a beautiful young princess, called "the fair maid of Kent," because she was the daughter of his father's uncle the Earl of Kent, who, during the King's boyhood had been beheaded by the wicked baron, Roger Mortimer. It seemed as if the Prince could not live without fighting, for he soon went to Spain, to help a wicked and cruel king called Don

Pedro, whose brother Henry had been made King in his stead. It was a great pity that the Prince should have gone to help such a man, but he gained another victory there. When the King Henry of Castile heard that the Black Prince was coming he wrote to tell him that he intended to meet him and defend his kingdom. He was told by one of his friends that when he should meet the Prince of Wales in battle, he would find soldiers who would rather die on the spot than think of flying. And some advised him not to risk a battle, but to guard the mountain passes to prevent supplies reaching the army, and then famine would do the rest.

But Henry of Castile was determined to fight at once; a great and bloody battle followed, in which both sides fought bravely with great loss; but at last the Black Prince won the victory. King Pedro praised and thanked the Prince, but refused to pay his troops, and was soon after killed by his brother, who then reigned in peace over all Castile. The Black Prince, however, gained great fame throughout Europe, and many said that a prince who had won three great victories was worthy of governing the whole world.

The Prince and Princess of Wales had now two little sons, Edward, three years old, who died soon, and a younger one, born at Bordeaux, and therefore called Richard of Bordeaux, who became King after Edward the Third. For the Black Prince—dying before his father—never became king. The fair and good Queen Philippa also died before the King; and just before her death, she made King Edward promise that he should be buried beside her in Westminster Abbey, where their tombs may still be seen.

After his Spanish expedition, the Prince had a dis-

pute with the King of France, who wished to tax the Prince's Duchy of Aquitaine. The Black Prince would not submit to this, and another destructive war began. This was very bad for poor France, which had been ravaged everywhere and overrun, first by the English army, then by the "freebooters," or troops brought from other countries, who would not go away, but lived by plunder. Lastly the poor peasants—robbed on all sides, and in despair—set up a fight of their own in which many cruel deeds were done. There were many strange adventures of English knights in France at this time. The Black Prince, though so ill that he had to be carried in a litter, went to the French town of Limoges, and did the most cruel act of his life in destroying it and killing its people.

Not long after the Province of Aquitaine was lost by England, and the Prince left France because of ill-health, and went to live in his English home of Berkhurst. He died at Westminster Palace in 1386, deeply mourned by the people as well as by his father, who outlived him only one year in weakness of mind and body, and under the influence of a bad and selfish woman. The Black Prince was buried with great honours in Canterbury Cathedral. Upon his tomb lies his effigy (or figure) in brass, with his helmet on his head and a lion at his feet. It is still shown to all who go there, as that of one of England's famous heroes. This was, indeed, a time when England was suffering much from the long and costly war abroad, which cost nearly all her foreign possessions. Her commerce was almost gone, and the terrible Plague or "Black Death" had desolated the country. Many evils needed remedy, and at last, about this time, the

famous Parliament called "The Good Parliament"—because it did so many good things for England—came to the rescue. In it what we now call "the Commons" or the "Lesser Folk," had much more power than the "Great Folk" had allowed it before, for now the knights and merchants or "burgesses" were united and worked together. Many protests were also made against real grievances and injustice, and, among other things, as the King's mind was almost gone, his little grandson, Richard of Bordeaux, a lovely, graceful, golden-haired child of ten, was brought into Parliament, and declared his grandfather's rightful successor—being duly crowned on the old King's death, shortly after.

Edward The Third and the Black Prince were—like Edward the First—brave men and great soldiers; but they fought for their own ambitious ends, not for the good of their people, to whom as well as to France these wars brought much misery. And each had to die unsatisfied, leaving the English throne to an unfit heir, destined to an unhappy end. Yet under them the English nation became renowned for brave deeds in war, and this helped it to become a power for good in the world in days to come.

CHAPTER XXI

CHAUCER AND HIS PILGRIMS

1340-1400

WE have been hearing so much about wars and battles, that it might be thought that there was little else going on in England. This is because History has so much to say about great events and the kings and leaders who guide these, that it is often left to the poets and story-writers to tell us about the life of ordinary people.

There were a few poets and story-tellers after the time of Bede and Caedmon. In the reign of Henry I, who, we know, was called a "good scholar," there was a Welsh priest called Geoffrey of Monmouth, who wrote tales about King Arthur and his knights and many other things besides : and a poet called Wace, also wrote poems about the early Britons and the Normans. About the time when King John began to reign, there was another priest named Layamon, who set himself "to tell the noble deeds of England—what the men were named and whence they came, who first had English land." Other tales and poems were written—some in Anglo-Saxon, some in Norman-French, and rude ballads grew up among the people, about the famous Robin Hood.

There had been more war than poetry in England for a long time, but in the reign of Edward III there was mostly peace at home, though there were so many wars abroad, and there lived, about this time, a famous writer of "Moral Tales," named John Gower. But six years before the Battle of Crécy, a poet was born who has been called the Father of our modern poetry. He was the first who wrote in something like our modern English, which, in spite of old words and old spelling, we can easily understand to-day, and he has left us word-pictures of the men and women who lived in England then. He tells us how they looked, what they talked about, and how they lived, and from him we can learn more about them than from most great histories.

His name was Geoffrey Chaucer, and he was born about 1340. His father was a London merchant, and when Geoffrey was about sixteen, he became a page to the wife of one of the King's sons, Lionel Duke of Clarence. He lived for a time in the Prince's house at Hatfield, where he met another Prince, John of Gaunt, afterwards Earl of Lancaster, who helped him much through life. Before he was twenty, he went to fight in France, and was taken prisoner there; but the King paid his ransom and took him into his own service. He was soon promoted to be one of the King's guards, and married one of the court ladies, a sister of the wife of John of Gaunt. He went to France again with Lord Percy and others, on several important errands, and as he showed that he could be trusted, he was sent three times to Italy, to arrange about a trading-port and other matters of the King's business. The first time he went, he met the great Italian poet

Petrarch, who told him a story which he afterwards put into verse. These journeys took him into a new world of painting, sculpture and poetry, which were now making great progress in Italy, and he began to study the great Italian poets.

Chaucer in time got a post in the King's service as a collector of customs for wool and leather, and for a while he had to settle down to business, keeping his books, and looking after the goods. But he went on studying poetry and writing poems, and at length he got a higher office, which enabled him to have an assistant so that he could go out of London to live at pleasant Greenwich, and go on with the work he had begun. But when John of Gaunt went away, and the Earl of Gloucester came into power as a guardian of the young King, Chaucer lost his office, and soon after that his wife died. He had to get such work as he could, and as he loved the country, he was glad to have that of a forester (or woodsman) in Somersetshire. When Richard II came to the throne, Chaucer got a pension sufficient for his needs. He died at the end of the century, and was the first poet buried in Westminster Abbey. There is, in the British Museum, a portrait of him, in his dark dress, with forked beard and thoughtful dreamy eyes looking downward, as they used to do ; for he himself makes one of his characters say—
“Thou lookest as if thou would'st find a hare, and ever on the ground I see thee stare !”

Though he lived such a busy life, Chaucer studied many poems and books, as well as wrote many poems. But— even more than books—he loved the English spring, and then he used to leave his books and go to the meadows in the early morning, to see the daisy unfold

its blossoms to the sun. Most of his first poems were French or Italian tales, but, as he grew older, he thought more of his dear native land, and one of his best poems is a tale of a journey to Canterbury in the lovely English spring-time.

We have seen how common it was for people in that age to make "pilgrimages," or journeys to places where **great things** had happened, or where pious people had lived. In England it was a common thing to make a pilgrimage to Canterbury, where the first Christian teachers from Rome settled and built churches. There, also, was the tomb of Thomas à Becket, which many people liked to visit. Chaucer tells us how he went on one of these pilgrimages and describes the people who went with him. There were thirty in all, for in those days it was not safe to travel on the highways without a large party.

Our modern poet Browning has written—

"Oh to be in England, now that April's there !"

and Chaucer begins his *Canterbury Tales* by describing the charm of an English April, when the soft showers send the fresh sap through the leaves and blossoms, and the fragrant breeze stirs the young grain, and the little birds "make melody," and people, young and old, long to go roving through the land. The poet and his fellow-traveller set out from the *Tabard Inn* at Southwark—now a part of London—where they met, and were all lodged in "wide chambers" and enjoyed a good supper, while their horses rested in comfortable stables before the long journey. The Pilgrims began their long ride very early, and before starting they agreed to entertain each other by telling stories on the

way. Then he tells us who they all were, and what they were like.

The first was a knight, mounted on his good steed, and a worthy knight he was, for he "loved truth and honour, freedom and courtesy." Chaucer calls him "a very perfect, gentle knight" (i.e. with gentle manners). He had fought in fifteen battles in various parts of the world, having but lately come home from a Crusade, and his fustian dress showed the rust left by the coat of mail. With him rode his son, a youth about twenty, active and strong, though not tall: a true English lad, "fresh as the month of May!" wearing a coat embroidered with red and white flowers. He was so full of glee that he sang all day long, and could make songs and drawings, and "carve before his father at the table." Already he had shown himself brave in battle, and was now thinking much of his lady-love, and how to please her. They were followed by a sturdy, brown-faced yeoman in green hunting-coat and hood, with his "mighty bow," and a bracelet on his arm. He had on one side a sword and buckler and on the other a short dagger; and across his breast was the "baldrich" or cross-belt that bore his hunting-horn, for he was a woodsman and well armed against highway robbers, too.

Next he tells us about a gentle lady, Madam Eglantine, who was prioress (or head) of a convent of nuns, and therefore a good singer of sacred music. He tells of her quiet gracious bearing, her dainty manners at table, and her half-English, half-Norman speech. He also speaks of her tenderness of heart, and of her little pet dogs, which she tended so carefully and grieved over, if any of them died. He describes

her neat cloak, the "crimped" (or pleated) kerchief round her neck, her fair broad forehead, shapely nose and small red mouth, and even her coral bracelet and golden brooch.

Next he pictures for us a bald-headed monk of those days, on his well-fed brown palfrey (or road-horse). He was a very different kind of man from Columba or Cuthbert, for he cared much more for hunting and feasting than for study, or for preaching, or working with his hands like the monks of old times. He had a bald head and rosy face; a gold pin sparkled in his monk's dress, with long, wide fur-trimmed sleeves, and his bridle jingled with merry bells. Beside him was a friar, one of a new kind of monks that had sprung up since the old ones had become so careless and selfish. These friars (or brothers) were banded together in brotherhoods called after the good men who had founded them, Dominicans and Franciscans. The first wore long black robes, and the latter grey ones, with a rope tied round the waist, and a hood hanging down the back, for they used to go about bareheaded. They were not allowed to have money of their own, lest they should become rich and lazy; so they had to beg for their living, and were called Begging Friars. Unlike the monks they had not even homes of their own, but the people built for them huts of stone and earth, where they used to live very much as their leader, the good St. Francis of Assisi did in Italy. At first they preached a great deal, especially to the poor, who had no Bibles, and could not have read them if they had had them. But by the time when Chaucer wrote, the Friars had grown lazy too, and he tells us that they used to go about peddling knives and pins,

playing on a sort of fiddle, and coaxing a farthing out of poor bare-footed widows ; for this one, he says, was the " best beggar in his house."

Very different from him was the pale thin Oxford scholar, in his threadbare short cloak, mounted on his lean horse. He was poor, too, but no beggar, and liked better to have plenty of books about him, than to wear fine clothing or feast on dainties. He did not talk any more than was necessary, but when he did, he talked well ;

" And gladly would he learn and gladly teach ! "

The next was a merchant with a forked beard, a broad Flanders beaver hat and a smart suit, and so full of his good bargains, that no one would have known that he was in debt ! Next to him rode together a stately pair—a great lawyer and a country squire. The lawyer knew all about the laws, from King William's time, and when in London, used to walk about in the open square before St. Paul's, to meet people who wished to consult him. He had at home, Chaucer says, " great store of robes and furs," but on his journey he wore a plain suit of motley (mixed colours) girded with a silken belt studded with small silver bars. His companion was a ruddy, white-bearded, comfortable looking English squire, who liked to enjoy himself, and had so much good food in his well-stored house, that it seemed as if there " it snowed in meat and drink " ; and the table in his stately hall stood ready covered all day long. He was what we should call " Chairman " at meetings in his county, where he had been a sheriff, and was clearly a very trusty man.

Then we have some worthy tradesmen—a “haberdasher” (hat-seller), a carpenter, a weaver, a dyer and an upholsterer, each wearing the dress of the Society or “Guild” to which he belonged. They had with them a cook, who could “roast and boil and fry,” make good soup, and “well bake a pie.”

After this group came a bold, sunburnt “shipman” or sailor, mounted on a common cart-horse. Over his coarse frieze jacket he had a dagger slung round his neck, and hanging under his arm. Chaucer tells us that he had seen many lands, knew all the ports and all the rivers, and that his beard had been shaken by many a storm. After him came the “Doctor of Physic,” a very important person, well trained in physic and surgery, and a “very perfect practiser.” He was careful about his own diet, as became a doctor, and was richly dressed in blue and crimson cloth lined with silk. Then we have the “good wife of Bath,” well fitted out in her own good cloth, which she could make as well as any weaver, her scarlet hose and well-shod feet, armed with spurs. She sat “easily on her ambling horse,” and well she might, for she was a much travelled dame, and had seen a great deal of the world, even in those days of slow and difficult travel. For she had been three times at Jerusalem, not to speak of Rome and other places.

Chaucer does not describe all the pilgrims so fully, but he takes special notice of two, the Ploughman and the Parson. He tells us that the Ploughman was a “true worker, living in peace and perfect charity, and loved God best with his whole heart.” He also tells us that this good Ploughman would thresh, dig and delve with all his might, for Christ’s sake,

without hire, for any "poor wight" who needed his help; and that he paid his tithe (or church-tax) both of his cattle and of his wages.

The Parson (parish priest) seems to have been a special favourite of Chaucer's, for he draws his picture very carefully, as if he were some one he had known. He tells us that he was kind, patient and wonderfully diligent, a true shepherd of his flock, and no hireling. He shows us this good man, always travelling about his wide parish, where the houses were far apart, never failing to visit even those farthest off, when sick or in trouble, always a good example to his people. Like Columba and his friends, he gave them the simple teaching of Christ and His Apostles, "and first he followed it himself."

Chaucer's pilgrims were asked by the good host of the *Tabard Inn* to agree to tell two stories each, in journeying to Canterbury and back; and whoever should tell the best one was to have a supper from all the others on their return. The stories they told are far too long to be set down here, but can be read by themselves. In some of these Tales, and in others of his poems, Chaucer tells us other things about the life both of the poor and the rich. One of his pilgrims tells us about a poor widow who lived with two daughters on a small piece of ground, on which she kept a cow, a sheep and some pigs and fowls. He says she lived on milk and brown bread, though, once in a while, they had a few eggs and some bacon, and "her diet was according to her coat." He also tells about a knavish miller who used to steal part of the flour he ground for other people, and of a trick he played to avoid being found out. At the end of all the Tales, the Parson preached a sermon,

in which he said some very plain things about the "sinful, costly array of clothing" which prevailed among the fine gentlemen and ladies, their richly embroidered stuffs and long gowns trailing in mud and mire ; and about the rich meats and dainty dishes which they had upon their tables. And he ended his sermon with good advice—*not to live selfish lives, but to try to serve God in serving their fellow-men.*

We are told by other writers also, how very rich and gay was the dress of both the lords and ladies of this time. They often wore dresses made of cloth of gold and silver, as well as all sorts of jewelry. The ladies' gowns were often low at the neck, with tight sleeves, reaching sometimes to the wrist and sometimes to the elbow, in which case they wore long hanging frills. Sometimes they wore long tight jackets with full flowing skirts, but at other times these were so narrow that they sewed fox-tails inside them to hold them out ! On their heads they wore short hoods with long scarfs or bands, which were wound round their heads like a cord. They had handsome girdles or belts, and when they rode on horseback, they often carried in them small swords or richly adorned daggers. The men wore short cloaks, and when they were in battles they wore armour which was very complete. When Edward III began to reign, his knights had armour made of chains woven close together, but as this was very heavy, they began to wear "plate" armour, which was kept very bright. Many suits of this armour are still to be seen in museums, and even the horses were sometimes clad in armour. But after gunpowder came to be used the armour was no longer of much use, and soon it was laid aside altogether.

We may form some idea of the money spent by the great nobles, and the style in which they lived, when we are told that King Richard's household numbered ten thousand people, of whom three hundred were cooks. All these had to be provided for at the King's expense, or that of his subjects. And the poor people were made poorer by the constant wars and the heavy taxes they had to pay for them.

CHAPTER XXII

RICHARD II AND THE PEASANT REVOLT

1350-1399

IT is very pleasant to read the pictures Chaucer gives us of the country people in England, as he had seen them in his day, but we have also pictures of a very different kind, giving another side of the life of this time. There was another poet, William Langland, whom the London people called "Long Will," because of his tall, spare, black-robed figure, who wrote a long poem called "The Vision of Piers the Ploughman," in which he describes the life of the poor farm-labourer. He says of one poor man, that he has "no salt bacon or cooked meat, but only two green cheeses, some curds and cream, and an oaten cake ; with two loaves of beans and bran for his children." And many were much poorer than this, and often knew well what it meant to be hungry.

We have seen that slaves were no longer allowed to be brought into England ; but though there were now no more actual slaves, there was a large number of the people who were *not free*. As they had no land of their own, they were obliged to gain their living by doing the work of the knights and squires on whose land they lived. In return for their bare livelihood,

these people, who were called "villeins"—i.e. belonging to the villa—were bound to dig and plant, reap and thresh for their masters, and were not allowed to go away from the place where they lived, without permission. And if they did not return, they were treated as outlaws. They were generally very ignorant, as well as poor, for when they were children they were seldom allowed to attend school.

About the time when Edward III and the Black Prince were desolating France, a terrible plague came to ravage England, from some far-off land, where the people did not obey God's laws of health and cleanliness. In England, too, there was much of the same carelessness, and there were many dirty and undrained streets in the towns, where the plague was sure to spread. It was called the "*Black Death*," because when people were seized by it, death came so suddenly and terribly. It swept away more than half of the people in England, who at that time numbered less than four millions. In London alone, fifty thousand people were buried in one burial-ground bought for this use by a generous knight, at a place in London where afterwards stood the Charterhouse—a great school. Thousands of people died in other towns. In Bristol hardly enough were left alive to bury the dead. In the country it was almost as bad. More than half of the parish priests of Yorkshire fell victims to its violence. The labourers died in great numbers, and many of the farms were left untilled. We are told that "sheep and cattle strayed through the fields and corn, and there were none left who could drive them."

When this terrible pestilence had passed away at last, there were so few men left to work on the farms,

that the harvests rotted on the ground. The richer farmers were so anxious to get their work done, that they were willing to pay much higher wages than before. But there was a great deal of disorderly conduct, caused by the prevailing misery. Many labourers chose to go about the country, looking for the highest wages they could get, and would often turn into what were then called "sturdy beggars," or what we now call "tramps," and sometimes even into highway robbers. On this account a law was made, that all the men and women who had no money or land of their own, must serve any person who wanted them, and take the old wages. And though the old wages could not buy enough food for a man to live on, he was forbidden to leave the place where he lived, to look for better pay. If he did so, he might be put in prison, or branded on the forehead with a hot iron. Sometimes the labourers tried to make what we now call "strikes," and were helped by farmers and men of property who did not wish to see Englishmen turned into slaves.

There was one man who thought so much about these things, that it seemed as if he could hardly think of anything else. This was a "poor parson" in Kent, named John Ball. He used to preach much about it, and perhaps Chaucer was thinking partly of *his* sermons, when he wrote the "Parson's Tale." He wanted to see things made better, but he took a very unwise way to do this. He preached to the poor about the sins of the rich, and stirred them up to feel more keenly the hardships they suffered. In the name of the people, he asked what right their lords had to hold them in bondage. He said—"They are clothed in velvet, and warm in their furs and their ermines, while *we* are

covered with rags. *They* have wine and spices and white bread, and *we* oat-cake and straw, and water to drink. *They* have leisure and fine houses ; *we* have pain and labour, the rain and the wind in the field ; and yet it is of us and our toil that these men hold their state ! ”

This kind of speech was new in those days, when the barons and knights who had fought hard for their own rights and freedom, thought little of the rights and liberties of the poor. But a new trouble soon increased the discontent of the labourers. After the death of Edward III, while the uncles of young King Richard were trying to govern the kingdom in his name, the war with France was still going on, with some sad defeats, and its cost was so great that the Parliament set a new tax to be paid by every person in the kingdom over sixteen. As we have seen, the kings always made the people pay for the frequent wars, but this was the first time that the half-starved labourers had been taxed for themselves and their families. Then they began to meet, for angry talk, in the villages, and rough jingling rhymes passed from place to place, showing how the peasants desired freedom and just rule. From Norfolk to Devonshire, one county after another threatened to rise in arms. Even in London there were many who said that the country must be no longer so badly governed.

At last a tax-gatherer in Essex is said to have insulted the daughter of a poor man called Wat Tyler, and her father, furious at the outrage, struck him down with his hammer. All his neighbours took his part, and soon the whole county was in arms. In Kent the town of Canterbury was on their side, and soon a hundred thousand men were gathered round John

Ball, whom they had taken out of the prison to which he had been sent for his plain speaking. They armed themselves with clubs, rusty swords, bows, and any other weapons they could find ; and the Kentish men marched to London, on one side of the river, while the Essex men marched on the other, doing many deeds of violence as they passed on. At last they reached Blackheath, and halted there. They hoped much from the young King, who, as they thought, gave too much heed to bad advisers ; and they sent a knight to speak to him for them while he was staying in the strong Tower of London for safety.

King Richard was then a bright, fearless, active boy, about fifteen, and said at once that he would go on the next day, to meet the leaders of the men by the River Thames. Accordingly he went, in his royal barge, with some of his advisers, to the place of meeting. They found ten thousand men gathered there, who made such an uproar when they saw the King, that his friends were frightened, and would not let him land. " What do you want ? " he cried from the boat—" I am come to hear what you have to say." They replied—" We wish you to land, and then we will tell you what we want." But the Earl of Salisbury, who was there, said they were not in a fit state for the King to talk to, and persuaded him to return to the Tower.

The mob then returned to their companions at Blackheath, and all cried out—" On to London ! " On the way, they destroyed houses and monasteries, as well as a prison. When they reached the city, the London mob forced the guards to open the gates. The rioters rushed in, and took possession of all the shops containing provisions, as if they had been an

invading army. Then they marched through London—twenty thousand strong—and burned John of Gaunt's handsome palace, "The Savoy," in which King John of France had died, as well as other fine buildings. Everybody there was in terror, and none dared to resist the mob; so the King's friends advised him to try to pacify them with fair words. When they came and ranged themselves in front of the Tower, he sent them word that if they would go to a great meadow called Mile End, he would meet them there, and give them what they wanted. Most of them went thither, but some of the most violent, headed by Wat Tyler, forced their way into the Tower, when the gates were opened for the King to pass through. There they seized and beheaded the Archbishop and several others whom they hated, and they so frightened the Princess of Wales, the King's mother, that she fainted, and had to be carried to a safer shelter.

In the meantime, the King met the Essex men at Mile End, and said to them—"I am your King and lord, good people; what do you want?" Then they cried out—"We want you to free us forever—and our lands—and that we be never named nor held for serf." "I grant it," said Richard, and told them to go home, promising to send to them papers of freedom and pardon. That day more than thirty clerks were kept busy writing out these papers, and the men of Essex and Hertfordshire took them and went back to their homes.

But the trouble was not yet over. More than thirty thousand men still followed Wat Tyler, when the young King and his train happened to meet them near Smithfield in London. When he saw the crowd, he made up

his mind to stop and speak to them ; and Wat Tyler galloped up so close to the King that their horses stood side by side. Excited by wine, Tyler had hot words and a scuffle with some of the King's train ; and the Mayor of London rode up and struck him with a dagger, so that he fell to the ground, where he was soon killed outright.

The rioters, who had thus lost their leader, then drew up in a sort of battle array, with bows bent ready to shoot, and crying—" Kill ! kill !—They have slain our leader !" But Richard was not frightened, and did the best thing he could have done. He rode up to the rioters, and exclaimed—" What do you want, my masters ? I am your Captain and your King ! Follow me !" The people at once yielded to his appeal. They hoped much from his youth, and the riot was at an end. A large force now came out to restore order. The King's banners, which had been entrusted to the mob, were given up, and most of the men threw away their bows and dispersed.

The young King went to see his mother, to relieve her anxiety, and she received him with tears of joy. " Madam," said the boy, " rejoice and thank God, for it behoves us to praise Him. I have, this day, regained my inheritance, the kingdom of England, which I had lost !" On this occasion young King Richard behaved like a true son of his father—the Black Prince. But he did not " keep troth " and fulfil the promises he had made to the Kent as well as to the Essex men. Nor did he do anything to remedy the evils which had led to such a dangerous revolt ; for he marched through Kent and Essex with a large army, and punished many of the rioters with death, in spite of the pardons

he had promised. Sad to say, seven thousand of the men of England perished in battle or on the scaffold, during that unhappy summer!

When Parliament again met, the King or his Council, no doubt sick of the misery of the country, sent a message offering to set free the serfs, held in such degrading bondage. But the owners of the land, though they had fought for their own freedom, would grant none to their bondsmen. They said that their serfs were their *goods*, and that the King could not take their goods from them, but by their own consent. "And this consent," they said, "we have never given, and never will give, were we all to die in one day!" We can see from this, that England was yet a long way from being a really free country.

Soon after the Peasant Revolt, Richard was married to a fair and sweet young princess, the sister of the King of Bohemia, who was so much loved by the English people, that she was called "the good Queen Anne." Richard loved her devotedly, and it was a pity that he was not more like her, for his reign might then have been a much happier and more useful one. But though he was brave and clever, he had been badly educated and was unsteady, proud and passionate. He was also too fond of pleasure and feasting to be a good king, and he liked to amuse himself with foolish young friends who had an evil influence over him. For a long time his three uncles, the Duke of Lancaster (John of Gaunt), the Duke of York, and the Duke of Gloucester, continued to govern the kingdom. Lancaster's great fault was his ambition and being too fond of war—spending great sums of the people's money on a foolish campaign in Spain. The Duke of York had

not much sense ; but Gloucester, who was clever, was also very headstrong and cruel, and made Richard very angry by putting to death some of his friends—a thing the King never forgave. At last, when he was twenty-two, he made up his mind to insist upon his kingly rights, and told his uncles, one day, that he was now old enough to manage his own affairs, and would need their services no more.

At first things went well. He stopped the war with France by a truce or treaty, and as the good Queen Anne had died, he married the little Princess Isabella, the daughter of the French King. He went over to distracted Ireland and managed to pacify it, and restore order. He undertook to rule by the advice of his Parliament, and consult it on all occasions of importance. But he did not always keep this promise ; and the “ Merciless Parliament,” which was called together to crush various plots and plotters against the King and was very unlike the “ Good Parliament,” did some very unjust and cruel things under his influence.

As time went on, Richard seemed to grow more reckless, and did foolish as well as cruel deeds. He was determined to punish his uncle of Gloucester for the injuries he had received from him. One day he had him suddenly arrested and sent to prison at Calais, where he was soon killed—as the people believed by order of the King. After that, though Richard had been friendly with his uncle of Lancaster and his son Henry, who had hitherto loyally supported him, he banished Henry from the kingdom on a foolish pretext ; and on the death of the Duke, the King seized his whole property, thus robbing his cousin of his rightful inheritance.

But Henry of Lancaster was a stronger man than Richard, and though he had gone away quietly, he was only waiting for his chance. He knew that the English people were growing tired of Richard and his harsh and unsteady rule. One day, while the King was absent in Ireland, Henry of Lancaster landed in Yorkshire, with a few followers, and was soon at the head of a strong army. At first he professed to have come only to get back the inheritance which the King had seized. His uncle of York and other noblemen quickly came to his aid, and when Richard came from Ireland, he found that he had indeed lost his kingdom !

The King at first escaped to Anglesea, and planned to take shelter in France. But Henry pretended to be friendly, and invited him to meet him, saying that he had only come to help him govern the kingdom. As soon, however, as he got Richard into his power, he sent him under guard to the Tower. There the King was obliged to sign his resignation of his crown, and the Parliament declared him unfit any longer to be King. Then Henry of Lancaster arose in Westminster Hall, which Richard had rebuilt in its present grandeur, and claimed the crown as the next heir, although there was another heir nearer than he. Soon after this Richard died in prison at the Castle of Pontefract in Yorkshire, it is said through slow starvation, by order of the new King. Thus sadly and pitifully ended the life and reign of the gay, pleasure-loving son of the brave Black Prince.

CHAPTER XXIII

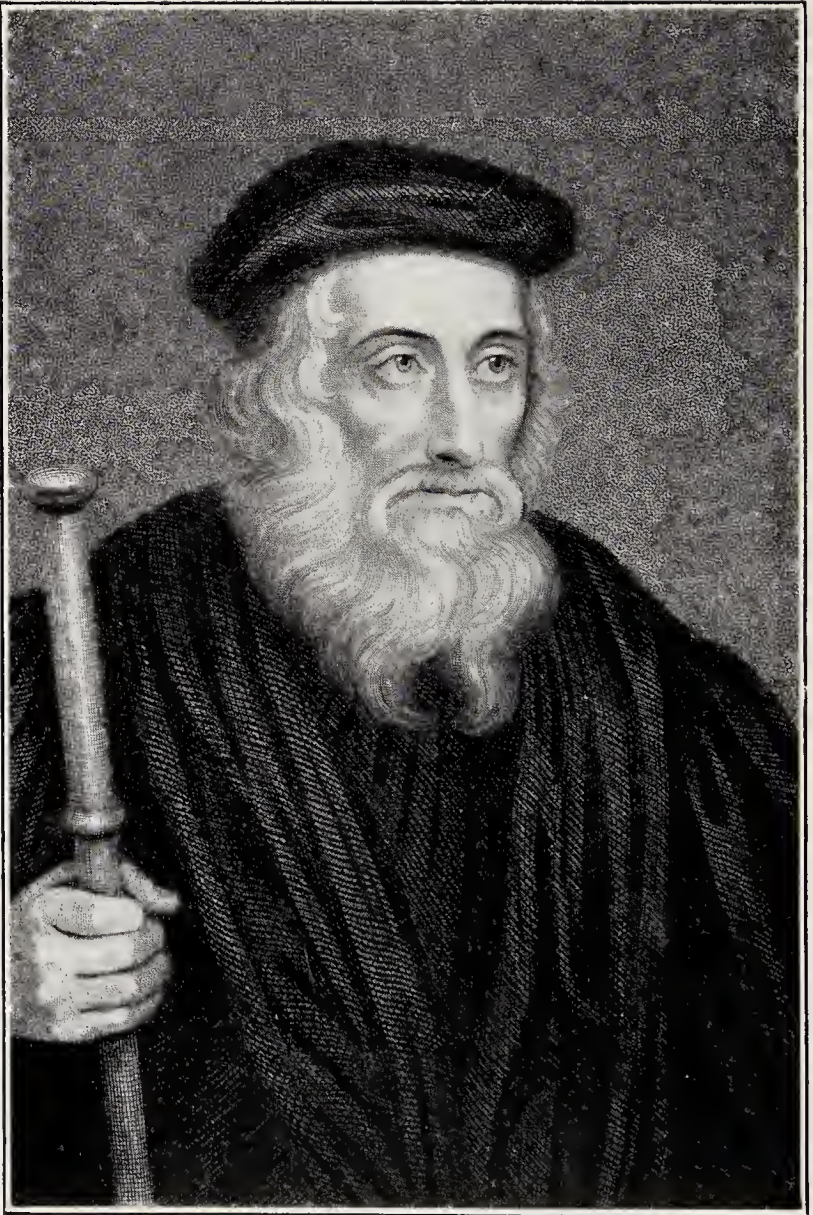
WYCKLIFFE AND THE LOLLARDS

1366-1384

AS we have seen, the times about which we are now hearing were, in many ways, very sad times for England. The wars of the country were not very successful, but they were very costly. The nobles were luxurious and extravagant, and cared for little but war or pleasure. The lords and ladies had forgotten that the old Saxon words for "*lord*" and "*lady*" meant, at first, "provider" and "loafgiver," showing how the rich had once used to care for the poor, and loved to help them. The priests and monks and friars grew careless and idle, and often lived evil lives, while the bishops generally cared more for power than for being shepherds of the people. There was very little preaching in England now; and as the people had not the Bible for themselves in their own language, they were very ignorant, and were led away by many wrong notions. The serfs (or bondsmen) as we have seen, were almost untaught, and very few people cared about them, or their welfare, while there seemed to be little real religion left in the land.

But there was a great and good man named John Wyckliffe, living quietly in a college at Oxford, who





JOHN WYCKLIFFE

thought much about these evils ; and his thoughts and words were, in time, to do far more good than he then knew. He was a great scholar and teacher, and therefore he had been made Master of Balliol College, where he met many of the wisest and most learned people in England. He was a fine-looking, noble-minded man, thin and worn with much thought and study, but pleasant and winning in his ways. He saw plainly that many things in England were wrong, and considered how they might be made better. He saw how heavily the people were taxed, and that the Pope, who was very different from the good Pope Gregory the Great, taxed them five times as much as the King. This was because King John had once given up his kingdom into the Pope's hands, and agreed to pay him yearly a sum of money. And Wyckliffe thought, as did another English writer at that time, that, " God gave his sheep to be pastured, not to be shaven or shorn." He saw, too, that many of the priests neither " preached what Christ and His Apostles taught," nor " practised this themselves." Many of the bishops were foreigners, appointed by the Pope, and others, who were Englishmen, chose to live in Rome, instead of looking after their people in England. Then there was still the same trouble about which King Henry II fought with Thomas à Becket ; for the bishops and priests could not yet be tried or punished by the ordinary laws of the kingdom when they did wrong ; while they themselves were constantly interfering with others in many vexatious ways.

Wyckliffe wrote much in Latin for the learned people, trying to show them that God is the King of all, from the Pope to the bondsman, that all owe obedience

first to Him, and that His grace can give them power to obey Him. He explained these truths so well that he was called the "Evangelic Doctor," and he was a very good preacher too, speaking to the people in a simple yet winning way, which made them crowd to hear him.

Wyckliffe also upheld the Parliament's refusal to submit to the Pope's tax. And John of Gaunt (or Lancaster)—a true Englishman—though fond of war and power, was much pleased with this, and stood his friend against the clergy of the kingdom, who had several reasons for not liking him. They insisted that their rich possessions should not be taxed at all, and were very angry when Parliament declared that this must be done. It was another cause of complaint that some of the highest offices in the kingdom were filled by bishops and other clergymen who could not be made answerable to the ordinary courts of law, if they did anything wrong, and Wyckliffe wrote a little book to show why this was a dangerous practice.

John of Gaunt was Governor of England during the feeble old age of King Edward III and the first years of young King Richard ; and went to Bruges in Flanders to try to settle matters with the Pope, who then lived in France, and who sent his messenger to talk with them about the matters in dispute. The Duke took Wyckliffe and five others with him, to help him, at this meeting, where little progress was made ; but Wyckliffe came back more determined to fight by his writings for the things he held so important. This he did so well, that when these matters were brought before Parliament, it was agreed to send a petition to the King to protect the liberties of England. The

Parliament was now divided into two Houses, in one of which the Lords or Barons sat with the bishops, and in the other the Commons, or knights and citizens, just as is done in London to-day. This Parliament of 1376 agreed on so many things that were thought good for the kingdom, that it got the name of the "Good Parliament," by which it has been known ever since.

About this time, the Duke of Lancaster fell into great disgrace with the people of London, who thought he wanted to make himself king; and the clergy disliked him because he was a firm friend of Wyckliffe. As they could not meddle with the Duke, the Bishop of London, whose name was Courtenay, summoned Wyckliffe to appear before a great meeting of clergy at Canterbury, because he had argued that the wealth of the Church should be taxed. The Duke of Lancaster and Lord Henry Percy, Grand Marshal of England, came to stand by their friend Wyckliffe. There were some high words between Lancaster and Courtenay, while Wyckliffe, in his long black robe, with his stately look and keen piercing eyes, stood by in silence. As the dispute grew fiercer, a mob of Londoners, breaking in, threatened to attack Lancaster, and brought the meeting to an end.

Just then King Edward died, and, when young King Richard succeeded him, Wyckliffe was again accused of having taught what was wrong and hurtful; and again he was called to appear at St. Paul's in London, on account of complaints brought against him by the Pope. It was said that men expected that "he should be devoured, when brought into the lion's den." But the people insisted that the Pope's complaints should have no effect in England without the King's consent,

“for every man must be master in his own house.” Then there came a message from the Queen-Mother (the Princess of Wales) commanding that the trial should stop, and the Londoners protested that Wyckliffe was a true lover of his country and had done no wrong.

He therefore went quietly home to his rectory of Lutterworth, to which he had been appointed by the Duke, and went on preaching there to the people in plain simple language. This was eagerly listened to, and as there was a great need for good preaching in England, he was determined—like Columba—to train a number of the Oxford students to preach the Gospel throughout the country, to the people who needed it so much. These young men were heard gladly wherever they went. And—seeing how much good they could do—many other young men, full of the same spirit, but not so well educated, also went about preaching in churchyard or market or fair, wherever they could gather a congregation. Wyckliffe called them his “poor preachers,” for they had no money, and often went about barefoot. Some of the proud clergy laughed at them, in their plain russet gowns, and some were angry; but the people thronged to hear them, and knights and gentlemen would often stand around the preacher, armed and ready “to defend him with their good swords, if need were.” But these men only preached God’s love and mercy, and spoke evil of no man.

It was about this time, however, that there broke out the revolt of the peasants related in the last chapter: and the enemies of Wyckliffe and his “poor preachers” tried to make the people believe that these

were all connected with that unhappy rising. The friars charged Wyckliffe with being "a sower of strife," and "setting the serf against his lord." But Wyckliffe was not in the least afraid of what any man might say. Even when he was openly condemned because he boldly denied some things then taught by the Church, he is said to have exclaimed, when suffering from a serious illness—"I shall not die, but live and declare the works of the Friars!"

Wyckliffe continued to uphold, to the end, the truths in which he believed, and though he had many enemies, and was once ordered by the Pope to go to Rome, to answer for the things he had said, he lived quietly at Lutterworth to the end of his life. He became nearly worn out by the labours of his busy life, but he had one great work to finish before he died, and the one which was to make the greatest difference in the future of England. This was the preparation of his English Bible. Before this time, those who could read had only the Latin Bible, though the "Venerable Bede" and King Alfred had translated parts of the Scriptures into Anglo-Saxon. But Wyckliffe, with the assistance of a young scholar, like-minded with himself, carefully put the whole Bible into English, so that the people could now read it in their own tongue; and, in Wyckliffe's own words, "Christ's word would run to and fro everywhere, and many men would wing their flight to Heaven."

Of course, every copy of Wyckliffe's Bible had to be written out, for as yet there was no printing-press. Notwithstanding this, many copies were scattered among the people, some being carefully and beautifully written for carls and knights who were anxious to have

a Bible for themselves. People who could not afford to buy a Bible of their own, used to borrow it from others, and those who could not read loved to hear it read by others. One copy sometimes cost about forty pounds (or \$200) and the country people sometimes gave a load of hay for even a leaf or two of it.

Wyckliffe died peacefully, though suddenly, at his home, leaving many followers in England. Indeed it was said that if you met two men in the street, one of them was sure to be a Wyckliffite, or as people began to say, a "Lollard." This was a nickname taken from a word which means to chant or sing softly, and was first given to a brotherhood in Germany that used to sing dirges at funerals. These Lollards were loved by the people, but disliked by the clergy, on which account, also, this name was given to Wyckliffe's followers also. They continued to teach and preach the truths Wyckliffe had taught them, and in time many joined them—both nobles and peasants. "Good Queen Anne" encouraged their labours and protected them as long as she lived. Women as well as men helped to teach and spread thoughts which took root in later times, especially the faith that, in the Bible, now so widely read, all could learn for themselves what God would have them be and do.

But the clergy objected very much to the Lollards, and did what they could to put them down. They could not do much while Richard continued to reign, for he, with all his faults, did not wish to interfere with people on account of their belief. Henry IV was the son of Wyckliffe's friend, John of Gaunt, and as he had thought Wyckliffe right in the main, he might have been expected to befriend the Lollards. But he

felt that he depended for his crown on the will of Parliament, and as the clergy had great power there, he did not wish to offend them. He had gained the favour of the nobles by keeping up the miserable war with France, and that of the clergy by promising to let them punish the Lollards for their beliefs. So the Lollards were all watched, whether they were preachers, schoolmasters or writers ; and if they taught anything the bishops did not approve, they were to be severely punished and even burned to death at the stake. This was actually the fate of a parish priest named John Sautre in 1406, the first martyr for his faith since the Christian religion had been established in Britain. Nine years later, a layman named John Badby shared the same fate. We should hold these names in honour, as the first who died in the long and hard struggle for the highest kind of freedom—that is—liberty to obey their own conscience as to their duty to God.

About this time, a noble Englishman, Sir John Oldcastle—afterwards Lord Cobham—did what he could to protect the Lollards. He prized the writings of Wyckliffe, and spent much money in having them collected and copied ; and he supported a great many of the poor preachers. For this the clergy found great fault with him and took the first opportunity of accusing him. Henry V was king then, and did not like such harsh proceedings, and he tried to get Lord Cobham to take back some of the things he had said, but he refused to do so. On the accusation of the Bishop of Canterbury he was sent to the Tower, and was tried by three bishops and condemned to death. However, he escaped from his prison and took refuge in Wales, where he hid himself for four years.

The Lollards were, of course, much excited and distressed by this treatment of their friend, and some one sent word to the young King that twenty thousand Lollards were to assemble in St. Giles' Fields outside London, with Lord Cobham at their head to take him prisoner. It is most unlikely that Lord Cobham would have attempted anything of the kind. But as about a hundred poor Lollards were found assembled—probably for worship—the story was believed, and did much harm to the cause. A great reward was offered to any one who would seize Lord Cobham, and at last this good man was taken and hanged as a traitor, after which his body was burned as that of a heretic. England had a long way to go, yet, before she became what she is in our own happier time—

“A land where, girt by friends or foes,
A man may speak the thing he will!”

CHAPTER XXIV

HARRY OF MONMOUTH AND AGINCOURT

1414-1431

YOUNG Henry, the eldest son of Henry IV, was a Prince of Wales not unlike Edward the Black Prince, for he was handsome, brave, generous and daring, and a great favourite with the English people. He was sometimes called "Prince Hal," because he was so merry and full of fun, and sometimes "Harry of Monmouth," because of the place where he was born. But his father seemed to be jealous of his high repute, which he thought might be dangerous to himself some day, as his own had formerly been dangerous to his cousin Richard; and he did not care to see the Prince at the head of his army, though he was a splendid fighter. As the Prince was prevented from doing the work he would have liked, he found mischief instead, for "idle hands to do." His wild young companions were ready to lead him on, and he did many lawless things, for the sake of fun, for which he was afterwards sorry. It is even said that he used to join his lawless young friends in playing the part of a high-way man, but this may not be true. There is a better story, which *is* true, and does much credit to the Prince. One day he heard that a servant of his was

being tried for some offence, before the Chief Judge, Sir William Gascoyne. He went into the court, and insisted that the Judge should let *his* servant go free. The Judge refused, because he was bound to do justice to all, in the King's name ; and the Prince, in a passion, insulted the Judge, who at once ordered the officers to take the bold young Prince to prison. When Henry got over his passion, he had the good sense to see that the Judge was right, and—giving up his sword—he went to prison without resisting. The King is said to have declared that he was happy in having so just a judge, and a son so willing to obey the laws ;—which was true, whether he said it or not. There is—in the splendid House of Lords at Westminster, on one side of the King's throne,—a picture representing this scene, which reminds all who see it that the King himself must always obey the laws of Britain.

King Henry was much pleased with Sir William Gascoyne for his firmness, and the Prince himself, when he became King, soon after, took the first opportunity of showing this upright Judge how much he esteemed him. He also called together his wild young companions, told them he was going to turn over a new leaf, and advised them to do the same. Then after giving them presents, he sent them away, telling them that they must not come into his presence again, till they had followed his example. While Henry was still Prince of Wales, he had taken part in a battle between the King and the great Earl Percy of Northumberland, about some prisoners taken from the Scotch in a fight with the famous Earl Douglas. So it came to pass that Earl Percy and his brave son—who was called Harry Hotspur, because he rode fast

and was hasty as well as brave—were fighting on one side, and the King and Harry of Monmouth on the other—Englishmen against Englishmen! And they fought even harder than if they had been fighting against foreigners. The Scottish Earl Douglas was determined to kill King Henry, but the King had made some of his captains put on armour just like his own, and several of these were killed, instead of him. “ Prince Hal ” fought as bravely as the Black Prince used to do, and Harry Hotspur fought just as well, but was killed, and the battle was won by the King’s men. We are told that more than two thousand English gentlemen lay dead on the battlefield, among them some of the best knights of the King. For war, always terrible, is still worse when it is a civil war waged between people of the same country : and England was to know too much of this during many of the coming years.

When “ Prince Hal ” became King there had been no wars with France for a number of years, but this did not suit either the King or his nobles. Indeed Henry IV, before his death, charged his son not to let the kingdom remain too long at peace, because the English nobles were so restless and fond of war, that, when they had no wars abroad they began fighting at home. So, as Shakespeare says, “ he must busy giddy minds with foreign quarrels.” For this was a time when there was very little learning in England, and what we call the arts of peace (i.e. the making of useful or beautiful things) did not much flourish ; so that the people who were not obliged to work for their living, had little to do but fight. The clergy, too, were anxious that there should be war with France, because the Parliament was threatening to take the great

property of the Church, in order to lighten the taxes of the people ; and they thought that if the English took back Normandy, *they* could take the lands of the Norman Abbeys to make up for what they might thus lose !

Henry had his own reasons for wishing to go to war ; for, like his father and grandfather, he was very ambitious, and had dreams of winning the crown of France. Just then it seemed a good time to try to get back the old provinces the English had once possessed, for France was in a miserable condition. The young King of France, who was called Charles VI, had been—like Richard II—for a long time under the charge of his three uncles, who, also, did not agree among themselves. As soon as he was old enough, he took things into his own hands, and showed so much sense and spirit that great things were hoped from him. But very soon he was seized with fits which made him mad for a time, and his mind became so much weakened that he was not fit to rule. And as his Queen, Isabella, was a very wicked woman, things seemed to go from bad to worse. One of the King's uncles murdered another, and openly boasted of it. This bad example soon made murders and robberies common throughout France, and the two Dukes who were left fought for the chief power, and divided the kingdom into two great parties, who were always fighting for the mastery, and trying to keep the King under their own control. King Henry thought this a good time to push his own plans, and sent to ask for the Princess Katherine of France as his wife, with an enormous amount of money, and all his lost provinces as her wedding portion. The French Court was willing to let him marry the

Princess, and have part of what he asked, but Henry would not take less than the whole, and so he prepared to try to take it by war.

He had collected a great army at Southampton, where he had provided a fleet of ships to carry the troops over to France. Just as he was preparing for the voyage, he found out that some of his nobles were plotting to set on his own throne his cousin the young Earl of March, who was really the true heir of Edward III, because he was the grandson of an elder brother of Henry's grandfather. The plotters were executed, though one was a cousin of the King. But as the Earl of March had not taken any active part in the matter, Henry forgave him, and remained his friend as long as he lived.

When Henry got his troops over to France, he first besieged Harfleur, and took it in a few weeks. He did not threaten to kill any of the citizens, like Edward at Calais, but he did what seemed hard enough, for he forced all the people to leave the place, and put his own people in it that he might make it an English town like Calais. But even the few hot summer weeks that the siege lasted, made his army much smaller, and a large French army was already in Normandy to oppose him. He had sent away his ships, for they could not remain before Harfleur, and he now offered to give Harfleur back to the French, if they would let him pass safely to Calais, but they refused the offer, which was a great pity for themselves. So Henry made up his mind to go on, through all the dangers of the way, for the French troops cut off his supplies, while sickness and fatigue weakened his army. In spite of all difficulties, he pushed his way through, till he

reached the now famous plain of Agincourt. Here he found the French army of sixty thousand men, four times the size of his own, drawn up in battle array, in such a position that he must either fight or yield ; for they barred the way to Calais, and his men were starving. But yielding was not in his dauntless English heart. Shakespeare represents this scene in one of his finest plays. One of his knights wished for " one ten thousand " of the idle men in England to help them to conquer the French, but Henry nobly exclaimed—" No ! Wish not one man more ! If God give us the victory, it will be plain that we owe it to His grace. If not, the fewer we are the less loss for England,—and the fewer men, the greater share of honour ! "

His own brave spirit seemed to pass into his weak and starving men, and no doubt all remembered Crécy and Poitiers, where English valour won, against just such fearful odds. Henry posted his little army on an open ground between two woods, and—once more—the stout English bowmen drove back the French cavalry, amid frightful slaughter. Henry was in the forefront of the battle, surrounded by his men at arms, wielding their battle-axes with terrible force. He was struck down once by a Frenchman, and the crown on his helmet was cleft by a sword-stroke. But—as at Crécy and Poitiers—the day was soon decided by the brave English archers. Ten thousand Frenchmen lay dead on the field, and among them many French princes and lords, while Henry took fourteen thousand prisoners. The English loss was very small—it is said not more than forty—but the King's cousin, the Duke of York, fell fighting at his side.

Henry now took his army back to Calais, then to

England, where the people crowded to meet him and to do him honour. He made a truce with France for two years ; but he was still bent on getting back Normandy, and, if possible, on seizing the French crown. So, with a new army, he went back to France, took a number of towns and castles, and then began in 1417 the siege of Rouen, the largest and wealthiest town of France. Its strong walls were defended by artillery, and it had a garrison twelve thousand strong, with fifteen thousand brave citizens to help them, under a gallant captain named Alan Blanchard. Henry knew that he could not take it by storm, so he determined to reduce it by famine. His troops were posted on all sides, to stop supplies from coming into the city. Even on the river Seine, he had a flotilla of boats to bar the way. For six months Rouen held out, while Henry's men stopped the most desperate efforts of the garrison to make a dash for provisions. At length twelve thousand of the citizens were driven outside the walls, so that the food inside might last the longer. Henry's heart was now hardened by war and self-will, and he did a very cruel thing, quite different from the humanity he had shown at Harfleur. He would not let these poor people pass his army, nor help them in any way, and so, though they had not done him any harm, he let them perish miserably. It was a dark blot on the fame of the hero of Agincourt ! And when at last the garrison was driven, by despair and hunger, to surrender, he put to death the gallant captain who had only been doing his duty to his country.

Not long after this the fierce disputes going on in France, and the hatred which the bad Queen had come to feel for her son, the young Dauphin, (or heir to the

crown), seemed to open Henry's way to the French throne. The Duke of Burgundy had been murdered in the presence of the Dauphin, with whom he had come to hold parley, and his son, the new Duke, called Philip the Good, offered Henry the crown, in the hope of bringing back peace and order. So he went to Paris, which was now in his power, married the Princess Katherine, and settled King Charles there, to reign till his death, after which he himself was to be King of France, as well as England; to which the French Parliament agreed. The young Dauphin of France was thus, with the consent of his poor, crazy father and wicked mother, deprived of his rights as heir to the throne.

Henry had now got all his ambitious desires fulfilled, and it seemed as if England and France were to become one kingdom, and the little Prince Henry, who was born the next year, was to rule both. But this was not to be. Just at the moment when Henry had gained so much power and military glory, and had nearly subdued France, he was attacked by a sudden illness which quickly carried him off. He called together his brothers and friends, and calmly told them how he wished the government of both kingdoms carried on, only regretting that he could not live to conquer Jerusalem, as he had desired. So ended the life and reign of the brave and handsome Harry of Monmouth, who was only thirty-four when he died, and in a short reign of ten years had fought so many battles and gained of many victories, that the English people have always regarded him as one of their greatest kings.

But he was not, like the great Alfred, a "shepherd of his people." The unjust war he carried on was

waged for his own honour and glory, bringing little good to England, and much misery to France. And he, too, like the great Edwards, was forced to leave the power he held so dear, to a successor incapable of holding it—fated to an unhappy reign and miserable end.

The Duke of Bedford, brother of King Henry, was left to carry on the war in France, till it should be all subdued by the English arms; and was almost as great a general as Henry himself. But there came a strange turn of affairs, in a way which no one could have foreseen. The mad King of France died soon after Henry, and the young Dauphin at once made a stand for his rights as Charles VII of France. At first he was very unsuccessful, lost many towns, and was defeated in a battle, with the loss of the best part of his army. The city of Orleans, too, was closely besieged, and the young King and Queen were so poor that they could hardly keep their table supplied for themselves and their little court. It is no wonder that he almost lost heart and hope.

But there was one person in France who did *not* lose hope, and who was determined that France should *not* become a possession of England. This was not a noble or a warrior, but a peasant maid whom we now know as Joan of Arc. She was the daughter of poor parents living in a little village called Domremy in the province of Touraine, close to the beautiful green woods of the Vosges Mountains. When she was a little girl, she used to love the forest, and the birds and beasts would come at her call. She heard fairy stories, and used to go, with other little girls, to hang garlands on trees which the fairies were supposed to love. At

home she was always busy, spinning or weaving, or keeping sheep, and never dreamed of doing anything else, or going far away from her quiet home. When she grew older, she used to go out to service, and was for a time a servant in a country inn, where she would ride the horses to water without a saddle, and grew strong and brave, but remained a good girl, kind and simple and pleasant in her ways, as she had always been. The inn was near the great road to the city of Orleans, and Joan heard much, from those who passed, about the sad state of the country and the young King, and more particularly about the misery of the people of Orleans, who were starving, and could not get any supplies taken to them, because the English had built sixty forts round the city, to prevent any one from going in or out. Then many sick and wounded men came to Domremy, and Joan would give them her own bed and tend them through their sickness. She thought about these things continually, while at her work, and when she went to walk about the garden in the dusk. Her own heart was burning to do something for her unhappy country, for which, as she said, "she had pity"; and she fancied that she heard voices telling her that she must go to help the King, and restore to him his kingdom. But how, she thought, could a poor maid like herself ride to the wars or lead men at arms? Yet more and more it was impressed on her mind that this was the will of God, and she was determined to do it. The wise people of the village laughed at her, the priest disapproved, and her father was so angry that he threatened to drown her.

But Joan was clear in her own mind.—"I would far rather rest and spin by my mo'her's side," she said—

“for this is no work of my choosing, but I must go and do it, for my Lord wills it.” At length she had her way, and was taken to the young King, who received her amid his nobles and guards. She told him that she was Joan the maid, and that by the grace of God, and the force of arms, she would set Orleans free from its besiegers, and would conduct the King himself to be crowned at Rheims. And she fulfilled both promises. Joan’s earnest words impressed all who heard her, even the French Parliament, to which she was sent. People began to take heart again, and felt as if Joan were really sent to do this great work, like the prophetess Deborah, of whom we read in the Bible. So it was agreed that she should go, at the head of an army of ten thousand men, to take supplies from Blois to Orleans. She was arrayed from head to foot in a suit of white armour, and carried a large white flag, covered with golden lilies (or *Fleurs-de-lis*), the emblem of France. The rough soldiers who followed her ceased swearing at her bidding, and all about her caught her spirit and enthusiasm. When Count Dunois, the general at Orleans, came out to meet her, she told him “she brought to him the best aid ever sent to any one—the aid of the King of Heaven.” She had already written to Bedford that she required and prayed him to work no more harm in France, but to go in her company to rescue the Holy Sepulchre from the Turks. She led her troops triumphantly into Orleans, the besiegers seeming for the time overawed. The people hailed her as their deliverer, and believed her when she told them that all the strong forts outside could be taken from the enemy. And one by one they *were* taken, through the good generalship of Dunois, and

the hope and faith with which Joan inspired her troops, while the English army—almost paralyzed by the strange appearance of “the Maid”—in a few days retreated from Orleans. Joan gave thanks to God, with tears of joy, over the deliverance He had brought through her, and was after that always called “The Maid of Orleans.”

But she had to fulfil her other promise—to conduct the young King to Rheims to be crowned. This also she did triumphantly, notwithstanding all the dangers of the long journey. During the grand ceremony, Joan stood beside the King with her white banner unfolded, and her heart full of grateful joy. When it was over, she threw herself at the King’s feet and begged leave to go home, as her errand was now done.

It was a great pity for England, as well as for France, that her request was not granted. But the French generals still wanted her aid and entreated her to continue her work. So though she longed to go back to keep her sheep once more, with her brothers and sisters who she knew would be so glad to see her again, she allowed herself to be persuaded, and fought at the head of the French troops a year longer. Then, while trying to help another besieged city, she was taken prisoner by a Frenchman fighting on the English side, and by him sold to the English, who hated her for conquering them. Many of them believed that she had done it by sorcery or witchcraft, for this was a foolish idea that was often held in those times, about people who were wiser than others, or did wonderful things, and it was the cause of many cruel and wicked deeds in the years that followed.

It seems strange that King Charles and his troops

do not seem to have made any attempt to save the life of brave Joan of Arc, though this would not have been easy, as she was kept a close prisoner in the strong city of Rouen. The English were determined to take her life, which was a great disgrace to them, and stains the memory of the brave Duke of Bedford. They pretended to try her as a witch, set a trap for her to make her appear guilty, and finally had her burnt at the stake in the market-place in Rouen. It was one of the greatest crimes in history, and even a rough soldier exclaimed, after her death, "We are lost,—we have burned a saint!" And the cause of the English was lost. A few years later they were driven out of France for good and all.

CHAPTER XXV

JAMES THE FIRST OF SCOTLAND, THE POET-KING

1431-1471

THE poor little baby King, Henry the Sixth—less than a year old—was proclaimed King of France as well as England. It was a hard fate for the child, and the years that followed were a miserable time for the people. For these years seemed to be one long course of quarrels, and rebellions, treachery and savage murders. England had now lost nearly all her possessions in France, which made the people very discontented. The great nobles with no strong hand to rule them were always falling out among themselves. Some maintained the cause of the King's branch of the royal family—that of Lancaster, while others upheld that of York—the father of the Duke of York having married the daughter of the Earl of March, who—as we have seen—was the true heir of Edward III.

These “civil” wars—within the kingdom—were also called the “Wars of the Roses,” because the nobles who fought for King Henry of Lancaster wore a red rose in their caps, while those who fought for the Duke of York wore a white one. It was a time when it seemed as if there was nothing going on in England

except fighting ; for there were twelve battles fought while this long quarrel lasted, and people were often put to death on the smallest pretence. Young King Henry himself was of so mild and gentle a nature, that he would willingly have given way to his cousin of York. He cared little for kingship, but was simply a good, amiable and studious man, who, because he loved learning, founded Eton College, and took a warm interest in the studies and progress of the boys. But he was married to a very clever and headstrong princess of the proud old House of Anjou, and Queen Margaret—a woman very unlike Margaret of Scotland—was ready to fight to the last for the rights of her husband and her young son Edward. More than once, during the long warfare, she was driven out of the country, while her husband was put in prison.

At one time, after a battle, she had to take refuge in the woods, with her little son, in order to escape from her cruel enemies. There she was attacked by robbers, who took away the necklace and other jewels which she wore. While they were quarrelling over their plunder, the Queen stole away, leading her boy by the hand. But presently she met another robber from whom she could not escape. So she thought she would trust him, and said—" My friend, this is the son of your King. I trust him in your hands ! " This robber was not so bad as the others, and as the Queen and her son were weary and hungry, he took them to a cottage where they got food and rest. After that they were able to reach the sea-side, and escape across the Channel to Flanders. Poor King Henry managed to hide himself for a time, but was at last taken captive and sent to the Tower, while Edward, the young Duke of York,

a handsome, clever youth of nineteen, was crowned as Edward IV, so that now there were two Kings of England, one of whom was shut up in prison.

But there was a great noble related to the King, the Earl of Warwick, often called the "King-maker," for he sometimes fought for one King and sometimes for the other. Edward the Fourth offended him because he chose to marry a beautiful English lady whom he loved, instead of a French Princess. After that, Warwick took Henry out of his prison, and set him again on the throne, sending for Queen Margaret to return. But before she could get back, Edward the Fourth returned from France, to which he had meantime escaped, and—raising an army—he fought the battle of Barnet, in which Warwick was killed. When Margaret and her son reached England, she and her friends risked another battle at Tewkesbury, but were defeated. Then she and the King were sent to prison, and young Prince Edward was cruelly stabbed to death by the friends of his namesake Edward the Fourth, who turned out to be a very harsh and cruel King.

It is pleasant to turn from such a sad time in England, to the interesting story and good reign of James the First of Scotland. During the reign of Henry IV, his father Robert III, the great-grandson of Robert Bruce, had been ruling Scotland. He had become a cripple, and was therefore unfitted to rule a bold race like the Scots. About the time when "Prince Hal" was playing wild pranks in England, King Robert's eldest son David was doing much the same sort of things in Scotland, and his father was unable to check him. The Scottish King had a strong, fierce brother, called the Duke of Albany, who seized Prince David while

riding, and sent him to Falkland Castle, where he soon died—no one knew exactly how. When King Robert heard of his death, he was much grieved, and began to fear lest some harm should come to the young Prince James, then only twelve years old, who was at school at St. Andrews, along with young Harry Percy, the son of Harry Hotspur.

Then King Robert got some of his friends to take Prince James, as quietly as possible, to a great rock in the sea, called the Bass Rock, to which he sent a ship to carry him to France. It was in wild March weather—not a pleasant season for embarking on that rough sea; and the poor young Prince must have felt very sad in leaving his sick father and his native land. But the ship had not sailed far down the English coast, before an English ship overtook it, and carried Prince James to the English King. No doubt Henry had heard of his journey, and was looking out for him.

The young Prince was at first placed in the Tower of London, where, however, he was well treated, and had good teachers to instruct him. And as he loved study, and learning, and music, which he used to compose for himself, he did not so much mind being a prisoner. But his father was greatly distressed when he heard that his son was taken, and he died about a year later.

After a time, James Stuart was taken to the magnificent Palace of Windsor, where Henry the Fourth and his court lived. “Prince Hal” was only a few years older, and no doubt young King James admired that brave young prince very much, and liked to imitate him in all manly sports, for he himself was very strong, and fond of all kinds of exercise. Probably they often

rode together, and practised shooting with the bow and arrow, which James learned to do very well. But he was always watched, and never allowed to forget that he was a prisoner, for the King thought that, so long as the Prince was in his own hands, he could exercise power over Scotland. Like other English kings, he wanted to be "over-lord" of Scotland, and it is said that he or his son asked the young King James to do him homage for his crown. This however James firmly refused, prisoner as he was.

As the young King grew older, he showed himself a poet and also a musician, as well as a scholar, and, like Chaucer, whose poems he doubtless read, he loved to describe the beauty of the early May morning, the fluttering of the leaves and the sweet singing of the birds. But one morning, as he stood at a window in Windsor Castle, looking down into a sheltered garden, he saw something even fairer than the greenness of the fresh spring-time. This was a beautiful young lady, whom he calls in his poem—"the fairest and the sweetest young flower," and from that moment he loved her and sought her for his wife. She was the Lady Joan Beaufort, a granddaughter of John of Gaunt, and in due time she became a good queen for Scotland.

When Henry V went over to France, he once or twice took with him James Stuart, as he thought it was safer to keep him with himself. When he had been defeated by the French, mainly through the brave fighting of the Scots and French army, it is said that he asked King James to "pass on to the Scots, and command them to return to Scotland." But the young King said that he wondered Henry did not consider that

“he had no power over the Scots so long as he was a captive, not a king.” And Henry is said to have replied that the people would be happy who should get him as their prince! About the time when Henry V died in France, King James was set free, as his uncle, the Duke of Albany, who had wished him to be kept prisoner, was also dead. Then he married the fair lady Jane, and returned at last to his own kingdom of Scotland, which he had left, eighteen years before, as a little boy of twelve. Not many would have been able to recognize the lad, in the happy royal bridegroom and cavalier of thirty, who now came back to them with his fair young queen. But his people received him with great joy in Edinburgh, and the streets and windows were full of people anxious to see him and the beautiful Queen in her splendid attire. For though James was poor for a king, Queen Joan’s rich friends had given her many costly presents, among which were rich robes and beautiful tapestry or hangings to adorn her rooms, like those Queen Margaret had brought to Scotland long before.

The King and Queen did not live at Edinburgh Castle, where the rooms were very small, as it was more of a fortress than a palace. They stayed at that time in the Abbey of Holyrood, which afterwards became the chief palace of the Scottish Kings. It was a pleasanter place, with gardens about it, more like what the royal pair had been accustomed to in England. Scotland was a much poorer and colder country than England, and we are told that the people used to warm themselves by burning “sulphurous stones.” This seems to be one of the earliest notices of coal fires in Britain.

King James found that many things had been going

wrong during his uncle's rule. Much disorder prevailed in the kingdom, and some of the nobles had been abusing their power by lawless and wicked deeds. A great part of the crown lands had been given away by his uncle to his own friends, so that there was very little property to enable him and his Queen to keep up their household as this should be done. But James soon showed that though he was a poet and a gallant cavalier, he could be a strict manager and even a stern ruler. He very soon arrested the son and grandsons of his uncle of Albany, though they were his own cousins, and they were tried by a court of nobles, and condemned to death. This seems a very harsh proceeding, but the King must have found out that they would have been dangerous to the peace of the kingdom, if they had been allowed to live.

King James was careful to consult his Parliament about the tax which it was now, for the first time, necessary to put upon the people, in order to keep up the royal state, and pay the ransom England required to set him free. This seems a strange thing to hear of now, but it was common then. The people were content to pay this tax at first, but they did not wish it to become a settled custom. When King James found this out, he stopped the tax, and at one time, when he thought it had not been right to require it, he repaid the money to those who had paid it.

In order to provide for the good order of the whole kingdom, the King and his officers made raids (or rides) of justice throughout Scotland. Sometimes the whole Parliament went too, even as far north as Inverness, where the old Kings of Pictland used to live in Columba's time. Sometimes the Parliament met at

Perth, a place where the King liked to live, and sometimes in the great Parliament Hall of Edinburgh Castle, where they "made many good laws, if they could have been kept,"—says the old Chronicler. It was in the Highlands, among the Celtic Scots, that it was most difficult to get the good laws kept, for there each chief ruled his tribe or "clan" like a king, and they all obeyed his orders. This old custom made much trouble in Britain, then and afterwards, as we shall see by and by.

There was one old chief who was called the "Lord of the Isles," and had great power in the north. He was tried by Parliament at Inverness, but was set free on his promise to amend his ways. But only a short time after this, he and his people took and burned Inverness, in a fit of revenge for his trial. However, when he heard that the King and his forces were coming to punish him, he fled to his Isles for shelter. He soon felt that he could never make a stand against the strong young King and the power of the whole kingdom, so he thought of a way in which he might get pardon, and make peace with the King.

On Easter Sunday, when King James and his court were at church in the beautiful Chapel of Holyrood, the rugged old chieftain came in, bare-footed, and without his plaid and weapons. He knelt before the King as a penitent, giving him his sword, and prayed for "grace in the name of Him who rose that day from the dead." The King could hardly deny a request so made, and the Queen interceded for the old warrior; but James did not feel that the chief could safely be left at liberty, so he put him in the strong castle of Tantallon for the rest of his life.

The thirteen years of the happy reign of King James were years of real peace and prosperity to Scotland. The people—even the poorest—had plenty of good wholesome food, though few luxuries ; and they were diligent and thrifty, weaving, in their own cottages, the stout cloth and “ blue-bonnets ” (or Tam O’Shanter’s) which they wore. Though there was as yet little that could be called “ manufacture,” they sent away hides and wool, salt fish and even pearls. The poorest peasants knew that their little possessions were safe, so that when French soldiers came into Scotland, they had to keep out of the growing corn, and let the good wife’s fowls alone.

King James loved to watch the life of the country people, and described it in some of his poems, as well as Chaucer described that of the English. He could preside at a Tournament (or duel between knights), or watch the lads and lasses streaming away in the early morning, to attend some village fair. He gives us one pretty picture of a Scottish May-day, when everybody was “ bound to the town of Peebles for the play,” with bagpipes blowing and every village trying to “ see which was most gay.” He describes the lasses in their new grey “ kirtles ” (or dresses) “ well pressed with many plaits,” and their doeskin gloves and morocco shoes, and the elder women with their little starched caps or hoods ; thus painting for us the country life of that long past age. His pictures make us feel that even in that age of violence and war, there was much humble happiness in Britain.

But this happy reign of the first James Stuart came to a sad ending. A Scottish knight named Graham had lost some of his lands under the new, strict laws

which the King had made. He spoke violently about King James in Parliament, and then took shelter in the Highlands, making threats against the King, who was very fearless, and thought little of the matter.

But, a year or two after that, the Queen heard something about a plot that was being made against the King ; and she persuaded him to break up the camp, in which he was at that time, trying to take the town of Roxborough, and to go to live quietly in a monastery which he had lately built in Perth. One night, while the King and Queen and their ladies were at supper, a great noise was heard in the street, and presently a servant, going into the hall outside, found some armed men there. He shouted " Treason ! " but the guards were killed at once, and the King had no weapons at hand. The door could not be barred, because the bolts had been taken away ; but one brave young lady of the Douglas family put her arm through the staples of the door to keep it shut till the King could escape, and her arm was broken. There was a trap-door in the floor, hidden by the rushes and straw, and through this the King got down to the vault below. But he could not get out of it, and was soon found and stabbed to death by the swords of the traitors, one of whom was his own uncle, the Earl of Athol. In those days, family ties seemed to count for very little, when ambition or revenge came in the way. The murderers were duly tried and punished, but that made little amends to Scotland, thus deprived of its good King James.

CHAPTER XXVI

THE PRINCES IN THE TOWER, AND WHAT CAME AFTER

1471-1510

IF Edward the Fourth could have known all that was to happen in the fifteen years that followed the battle of Tewkesbury, he might have shrunk from the blow with his mailed fist which gave the signal for the murder of young Edward of Lancaster. For he might have seen, in the future murder of his own two boys in the Tower, how evil grows out of evil, with consequences which seem often to fall on the innocent as well as the guilty.

Edward made himself and his wife's family hated by many, through his unjust and cruel acts. One of the first things he did, when a young king of twenty, was to have a poor London shopkeeper hanged, because, as his shop had the sign of the crown, he said, as a joke, that he was going to make his son "heir to the crown"; and this was called "Treason!" He is also said to have first introduced into England the use of a cruel instrument of torture called the *Rack*. He employed spies to go about and bring him tales by which he might accuse people when it suited him. And as he wanted a great deal of money, he used to demand gifts or "loans," which he called "benevolences," from all who possessed riches—tradesmen and nobles—who dared not refuse him. Many innocent persons were accused and executed during his reign, and he seemed to grow more

cruel as he grew older. One of the last things he did was to have his own brother, the Duke of Clarence, murdered in the Tower, because he had spoken out very plainly about some friends of his whom Edward had unjustly put to death. Very few people in England could be sorry when Edward IV died, for he ruled as a tyrant. In the French wars and the "Wars of the Roses," most of the great nobles had been slain, and as the King seldom consulted his Parliament, there was no one to check him, and he did as he pleased; so that England seemed to have lost, for a time, such freedom as it had before enjoyed.

Edward's two sons were still little boys when their father died. Young King Edward the Fifth, as the eldest was now called, was not yet thirteen, and the younger, the little Duke of York, was only nine. Their father had decided that his brother, their Uncle Richard of Gloucester, was to be their guardian and manage the kingdom, till Edward should be old enough to reign. It was a pity that he did not know what a cruel man this Richard was, or he would surely have left his sons in the charge of the Queen's brother, Earl Rivers, who was a kind uncle and brave soldier, as well as the most learned nobleman in England. The young king had been living quietly at Ludlow Castle, close to Wales, where he was going on with his studies under his uncle's care. The Queen greatly dreaded his going to London to be crowned, and she was very unwilling to trust him in the hands of Gloucester and his friends, whom she knew to be her enemies. So she asked her brother to take a band of soldiers to escort her son to London, and protect him during his coronation. But the Duke of Gloucester and other nobles would not hear of

this, saying that it would look like beginning a civil war again ; and the Queen and her brother were afraid to do anything to offend him.

But when the Earl was on his way to London with the Prince, Gloucester met them with an armed force, and seizing Earl Rivers and the young King's half-brother, he sent them and the gentlemen of their train as prisoners to Pomfret Castle. This greatly distressed the poor little King, who was very fond of them both. When the Queen heard this news, she saw that the cruel Gloucester meant to ruin the whole family, and she hastened to take refuge in the sanctuary of Westminster, in which she had once found shelter before. When Gloucester sent for the little Duke of York, because he said he must be present at his brother's coronation, she at first refused to let him go, for she felt that the elder brother was safer, so long as the younger was with her. But as every one advised her to send him, the poor mother, with many tears, at last let the two Archbishops take him away. When she bade him good-bye, she seemed to feel that she would never see either of her two boys again, and her fears proved only too true.

The Duke of Gloucester had no idea of having the young King crowned, for he had made up his mind to be King himself. He at once set to work to get rid of every one who would have tried to prevent this. He sent a wicked man named Ratcliffe to cut off the heads of the Earl of Rivers and the other gentlemen whom he had left in prison in Pomfret, and when he found, through a spy named Catesby, that Lord Hastings, Governor of Calais, was determined to be faithful to the young King, he got him beheaded in London. There was another bad man named Lovel,

who did the same sort of work for him, and as Richard had the device of a bear on his coat of arms, this rhyme was written about him and his accomplices, for which wretched couplet the writer was executed :—

“ The Cat, the Rat and Lovel that Dog
Rule all England under the Hog ! ”

Richard also put in prison, at the Tower, another nobleman, Lord Stanley, with the Archbishop of York and the Bishop of Ely, and proceeded to tell all sorts of lies in order to persuade the people that he was the right heir to the crown. He got the Duke of Buckingham—though he was married to the Queen’s sister—to help him, and the Mayor of London thought it would be best for himself, to do the same. At last they got a few men in London to shout “ God save King Richard ! ” and to make a pretence of offering him the crown. From that time he acted as if he were the rightful King of England, and called himself Richard III.

His next wicked deed, as has often been told, was to order the Governor of the Tower, Sir Robert Brackenbury, to kill the two young Princes. But like the brave Hubert de Burgh, when ordered by King John to kill Prince Arthur, this good man would have nothing to do with it. Then he got a gentleman named Sir James Tyrrel to take charge of the Tower for one night, and paid two men, named Dighton and Forest, to go into the little room in the Tower where the boys were fast asleep, and smother them with their pillows. This, at least, is the old story, and doubtless something of the kind happened. Perhaps it was a merciful release from a cruel imprisonment in that grim fortress ! They were buried at the foot of a narrow stone stair

leading up to their room, which is shown to every visitor to the great grim Tower of London ; and their bones were afterwards removed to a more fitting resting-place.

Richard was not the kind of man that many people would have chosen for a king ; for besides being false and cruel, he was ugly and misshapen, on which account he was called " Crook-back." For about two years he reigned, only through the fears of the people. The nation was soon tired of his violence and tyranny, and the Duke of Buckingham and others began to think about a young nobleman named Henry Tudor, Earl of Richmond, who was, through his mother, descended from John of Gaunt. He was the grandson of a Welsh gentleman, Owen Tudor, who had married Queen Katherine of France, after the death of Henry V. As he belonged to the Red Rose party, Henry had taken refuge in Brittany after the Battle of Tewkesbury. He was not a real heir to the throne, but the Red Rose party had thought of him for some time as the only hope left to them, and Edward IV had tried to arrange matters by proposing that Henry should marry his daughter Elizabeth, and come to live in England.

Henry of Richmond did not think it safe to come at that time ; but now, when he heard that the Duke of Buckingham and other English leaders were willing to make him king, he at last decided to come over and fight Richard for the crown. His first attempt failed through a storm which drove him back ; his friends were dispersed, and the Duke of Buckingham was beheaded at Salisbury. But the next year he succeeded in landing at Milford Haven, in Wales, and soon after that, with six thousand men, he met King Richard ;

and in April 1485 they fought the bloody battle of Bosworth, in which it is said that four thousand Englishmen lost their lives. The body of Richard was found covered with blood, and the crown, which he had worn in the battle, hung caught in a hawthorn bush. Lord Stanley took it up and set it on the head of the Earl of Richmond, while the victorious soldiers shouted joyfully "Long live Henry the Seventh!"

But there had to be a meeting of Parliament before Henry could be duly crowned, for he had no real right to the crown by birth, and must receive it from the Parliament, as did Henry the Fourth. He was a very different man from Richard; but though not violent or reckless, he was cold-hearted, utterly selfish, suspicious, revengeful, and very fond of money. He amassed vast wealth, forced from his subjects in many mean and oppressive ways. These great faults, of course, prevented him from being a great or a good king. One of his first acts showed the heartlessness of his character. The murdered Duke of Clarence had left one son, Edward of Warwick, whom the jealous Richard had kept under a guardian in Yorkshire. Henry at once sent him to the Tower by the same messenger he had charged to escort the Princess Elizabeth, who had been a prisoner in the Tower, but was now to marry him and become Queen of England.

But though he had shut up this unfortunate youth, lest he should some day become dangerous to his reign, he did not escape from the attempts of other "pretenders," who counted on the disgust which Henry's harshness soon caused. The first was a baker's son named Lambert Simnel, who was taught by a bold and clever priest, to pretend that he was the

young Duke of Warwick, and had escaped from the Tower. He went to Ireland, where the people were much attached to the memory of their old Governor, the Duke of Clarence, and were ready to welcome his supposed son, who was crowned in Dublin as Edward the Sixth.

To prove that this "pretender" was not the real Earl of Warwick, Henry had the poor young Prince taken from the Tower and brought to St. Paul's, so that every one might see him. But the King did not undo the wrong he had done, and set the young Earl free. Henry, however, had to fight a battle at a place called Stoke, before he could put down the revolt raised by Simnel, whom he punished only by making him a servant in his kitchen. And as the priest, who had contrived the plot, could not be punished by the law, he was kept in prison the rest of his life.

It was not long before there was another plot, but this time it was the poor little Duke of York who was said to have escaped from the Tower, instead of being with his brother. This "pretender," Perkin Warbeck, also landed in Ireland, which was much attached to the Duke of York. Many of the Irish people believed his story, but the earls were afraid to help him after their experience with Simnel. The French King, however, invited him to Paris, and received him with great honour, until Henry made peace with France, and insisted on having young Warbeck given up to him. Then he went to the Duchess of Burgundy, sister of Edward IV, who declared that he was her long lost nephew. She gave him a guard of honour and always called him "The White Rose of England." While he was there, a number of the nobles of the old York party

went over to see him, and offered him their services, believing that he was really the lost young prince. One of these was Sir William Stanley, who had helped to make Henry king, and who was afterwards beheaded shortly after this, because he had said that if he were sure that Warbeck was the true Duke of York, he would never oppose his claim. And it was thought that Stanley's great wealth was one of the reasons for his execution !

Warbeck tried to land in Kent, with foreign troops, but did not succeed. After that he went to Scotland, where the young King James IV, a brave and generous prince, was convinced that Warbeck was really what he pretended to be. He permitted him to marry a royal and beautiful young lady, who was faithful to him through all his future troubles, and was long known in the court of England as " The White Rose of Scotland." King James also helped Warbeck by taking his troops across the border, but as the English people would not join his army, he had to make peace with Henry, who insisted that Warbeck must leave Britain altogether. He went again to Ireland for a time, but in the next year, as the people of Cornwall and Devonshire were provoked by a heavy and unjust tax which Henry had set upon them, he came over to help them, calling himself Richard IV of England. He besieged Exeter, but as the King sent an army to oppose him, his courage failed, and—afraid to risk a battle—he took shelter in a sanctuary in the New Forest.

King Henry was determined to punish Warbeck as a traitor, and as he could hardly take him by force out of the sanctuary, he sent people to persuade him to come out under promise of pardon. Having in this way got

him into his hands, he made him stand in the stocks before all the people and declare that what he had said about his birth was a lie. After that he was shut up in the Tower, where the poor young Earl of Warwick was still a prisoner. There the two young men became friends, and as poor young Warwick, a prisoner all his life, was very simple, he was easily persuaded to join Warbeck in trying to make his escape. But the young men were both caught, and soon after were hanged as traitors.

There are some things to be said for the rule of Henry VII in spite of his cold-blooded severities. Being, through his father, of a Welsh family, he treated the Welsh people better than the kings before him had done. He took a great interest in the discovery of the American Continent, and helped to fit out John Cabot, when he sailed from Bristol for America, and discovered Newfoundland, and the coast of Labrador in the great unknown continent of America. And though his great fault was love of money, he could also spend it generously. He built a fine palace at Richmond, and added a beautiful chapel to Westminster Abbey, which is called by his name, and in which are buried some of the most famous kings and queens of England. Several good laws were made during his reign, which protected the poor, to some extent, from being unjustly treated by the rich and great. During his last illness, his conscience reproached him for the many harsh things he had done or permitted, and he ordered that some amends should be made to all whom he had injured. But notwithstanding his good sense in many ways, he had little feeling for others. It is said of him that he never had a friend ; and, when he died, there were few to regret him.

CHAPTER XXVII
THE AWAKING OF ENGLAND
1510-1534

HENRY the Seventh died, and Henry the Eighth became king before the sixteenth century was ten years old, and when he himself was only eighteen.

This Henry had, perhaps, the strangest character of all the kings who have ruled England, having much of both good and evil mingled in his nature. He was clever, lively and fond of learning, and was besides, tall, strong, and good-looking in his youth. He excelled in all manly sports, and might have been a great king like Alfred, doing even greater things for England. But he had no idea of being a "shepherd" to his people. He was fond of pomp and splendour, proud, vain, self-conceited, self-willed and ambitious. Whatever he wanted, he was bound to have, at any cost to other people. He was one of the most despotic (or masterful) kings England has had, for he wanted to make all his people do just as he pleased, whether they thought it right or not, and so set a very bad example to those who came after him. Perhaps we should not blame him too much for this, for nearly every one about him spoiled and flattered the clever and handsome young

King, from whom much was hoped by those who wished to see the English people in a better and happier state.

But what they thought his frank and generous temper and good intentions were withered by a blight which grew out of unchecked selfishness. One thing that happened, long before he was king, seemed to join with his ambition in giving his life a wrong direction. He had an elder brother Arthur, who had been married, when about sixteen, to the Princess Katharine of Arragon, and had died six months later. The money-loving Henry VII did not wish to send the Princess back to Spain, with all the rich gifts which she had brought to England, so he insisted that she should remain to be married to his younger son. Henry, who was only twelve, greatly disliked the plan, but he had to give way to his father, and the Pope granted permission for the marriage, which would otherwise have been held unlawful. It was, however, put off till Henry actually became king.

The Fifteenth Century had been one of wonderful change and progress in Europe as well as in England. Ever since the time of Chaucer, there had been a great revival of learning and knowledge in Italy and other countries of Europe ; but in England the people had been too much occupied with wars and rebellions to take much interest in studies which needed a time of peace to grow in. Still, one good thing which had come to England through the Norman Conquest was a greater love of learning and beauty. During the more peaceful reign of Henry VII there had been more time for this, and some books had been written and libraries began to be collected. And William Caxton,

the great printer, brought his printing-press to England, and was even encouraged in his pursuit by Richard III, for, bad as he was, Richard had some taste for learning.

There had been three great discoveries during the Fifteenth Century which quickened men's minds and thoughts. One of these was made by a great astronomer named Copernicus, who found out much about the sun, moon and planets, whose movements had long puzzled many people. Then America was discovered by Columbus in 1492, and more completely by John and Sebastian Cabot, a few years later. Portuguese sailors had also gone round the Cape of Good Hope, and had found out something about India. These events taught people more about the world they lived in as well as other far away worlds, and made them think about the unknown lands beyond the great sea, and long to explore them. The third great discovery was that of the art of printing, which soon put books within the reach of all; for written books cost so much at that time, that only rich people could buy them.

Printing was invented in Germany, but it is not certainly known who first thought of carving letters on wooden blocks, and then inking these, so that they would form the letters on the paper. For people had now learned to make paper out of linen rags, instead of the costly parchment which they had hitherto used. William Caxton, the first English printer, was born in Kent about 1420, and at eighteen was a shop-boy in London. He seems to have got on well, for, about fifteen years later, he set up in business at Bruges, with which the English had a brisk trade in wool. He

was made by Edward IV Master of the English merchants there, and in some way he came under the notice of Edward's sister, the Duchess of Burgundy. She was a lover of books, and employed him to translate (or turn) some of hers into English and copy them for her. There was one book, called the "Tale of Troy," which so many people wanted to have, that Caxton grew tired of copying it, for as he said—his pen was worn out, his hand shook, and his eyes grew dim with much looking at the white paper. This made him remember what he had heard of the new invention of printing; and, at much expense, he learned to print the book, so that a great many copies could be printed at once. He set up his printing-press at Westminster, near the west front of the church, and there the first printed books in England were made. He printed Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, and such other English poetry as had then been written. Edward the Fourth, Henry the Seventh, and even Richard the Third were glad to buy his books, and the accomplished but ill-fated Earl Rivers not only bought his books, but wrote some for him to print, and took a great interest in the printing.

But among all the English books which Caxton printed during the fifteen years when he was so busy at his press, there was not one copy of the English Bible; though there was a book called the "Golden Legend," which contained stories from the Gospels. There was as yet no English Bible but Wyckliffe's, and that the people were forbidden by their clergy to read, for these had become very different from Augustine and Aïdan. Many of the sad and wicked things that we have been hearing about could hardly have happened if the clergy and the people had been

learning and keeping in mind what their first teachers had taught:

But there had been a great awaking to this in Europe, especially in Germany and Italy; and good men, with the same spirit as these first teachers, began again to preach in England. One of these was John Colet, Dean of St. Paul's. He had been in Italy, where many learned men were studying the fine old Greek language; and, in studying the Greek Testament, he had found what he thought the people of England most required to make them better and happier. He saw that the teaching of Christ and His Apostles had been forgotten or disregarded, and that—most of all—they needed to learn of Christ Himself. Like the other good men of whom we have heard, he did not care for pomp or state, but always wore a plain black robe, and lived simply and plainly, even after he had great honours bestowed upon him. He began a grammar-school for boys, beside St. Paul's in London, and loved and taught his pupils as carefully as he did the grown-up students to whom he gave lectures at Oxford. Over the school-gate, he placed the figure of the child Jesus with the words, "*Hear ye Him!*" Once, when he was away from them, he wrote to his young scholars to "lift up their little white hands, and pray for him, as he did for them." The Bishop of London once tried to accuse him of teaching wrong doctrine, but young Henry the Eighth would not hear of any such thing. "Let every man have his own doctor," he said, "and let every man favour his own, but this man is the doctor for me!"

The study of Greek and Latin had been long neglected in England, but now there began to be some good

teachers of Greek. One was named Grocyn, and another—a still better scholar—was Doctor Thomas Linacre of Canterbury, who learned all he could at Oxford, and then he too went to study in Italy. And as he was a very clever student, he learned much more there to teach in his own country, when he returned. He was chosen tutor to the King's eldest son, Prince Arthur, and many of the best and wisest men went to Oxford to learn from him.

Among others, there came a scholar from Holland, named Erasmus, who became one of the most famous men of that time, and was a friend of the great Martin Luther in Germany, who was trying, like Dean Colet, to bring the Church back to follow what its first Teachers had taught. He was so pleased with Colet's teaching, that he thought Oxford would do as well for him as Italy. Archbishop Warham of Canterbury encouraged him to prepare his Greek Testament, which showed, better than the old version, what Christ had really taught; so that, in the Gospels, people might really see Him and hear Him. He wanted everybody to read and love these as he did; and he used to say—"I long for the day when the husbandman, or tiller of the soil, shall sing portions of the Gospel to himself as he follows the plough, when the weaver shall hum them to the time of his shuttle, when the traveller shall while away, with their stories, the weariness of his journey!"

Perhaps the greatest Englishman at this time was Sir Thomas More. Even as a little boy in the house of a great Cardinal, where he lived as a child, he was so bright and clever and sweet-tempered, that the Cardinal used to say he would turn out a wonderful man.

And this he did. For, under all his brightness and liveliness, he thought much about high and serious matters, and, when he was called to take office, he said plainly that he must first look to God, and, after God, to the King. When he was a young lawyer, and first went to Parliament, he opposed a heavy and unjust tax which it was proposed to put upon the people, and so "disappointed the King's purpose and lost his chance of favour from him." He wrote a history of Edward V, which is said to be the first book we can call modern English prose. He was a great friend of Erasmus, and liked to have him and other clever men come to his happy home. Erasmus was often there, and the famous German painter Hans Holbein lived in his house for a long time. Sir Thomas More was devoted to his wife and children, and liked to teach them; and as they were all very fond of music, they often had pleasant family concerts. They also read good books together, and not only his boy, but his little girls also learned to read and write Latin very well, besides working with their needles, and learning to be good housewives. He often walked and played with them in the pretty garden about his house at Chelsea, and took as great an interest in their rabbits and pet monkey, as they did themselves. At first he was a great favourite of Henry the Eighth, who liked to hear clever men talk, and used to keep him at court much longer than he liked to be away from home. But this did not hinder the tyrannical King from having him condemned to death, when Sir Thomas would not swear to agree in what he thought wrong. He was an old man then, and was kept in prison for a whole year, being allowed

to see his wife and eldest daughter only once. The King tried to persuade him to agree to what he wanted, but Sir Thomas steadily refused to tell what he thought a lie, and went cheerfully to his death, rather than go against his conscience. His daughter Margaret waited on the street to bid him good-bye, kissing him before all the soldiers, and crying bitterly because she should see him no more.

Sir Thomas More wrote a famous book, called *Utopia*, which is the Greek for "Nowhere," in which he described the sort of life he thought people might live, if everybody would do what was right. He said that there the houses had once been like most of the houses then in England, "very low and made of every rude piece of wood that came first to hand, with mud walls and ridged roof thatched over with straw." But the town he pictured for us was very different from that, for the streets were twenty feet broad, the houses had large gardens, and were built with their storeys one above another. The walls and roof were of brick or hard plaster, and the windows had glass in them, which was not common then. More, however, could not have imagined all the wonderful inventions which were to give us the comforts that homes have now. But in his land of "Nowhere," there were better things than clean or comfortable houses. In those days about half the people of England did not know how to read their own language, and half the children did not go to school. But in this land of "Nowhere" all the children went to school, and were taught not only to read and write, but also to know what the laws were, and keep them, so that they might not grow up thieves for want of learning to be honest.

At that time, in England, as we know, people were often punished with death for stealing, and even for smaller misdeeds. But More said that it was wrong to punish men as much for stealing as for taking life, and that this might tempt them to take good men's lives, in order to escape being found out in theft. And he tried to make people see how the poor were then oppressed by the rich, who as More tells us, "tried to take to their own use and profit, at the lowest price, the labour of the poor." But in this pleasant land of "Nowhere," laws were to be made for the good of the poor, as well as of the rich; and though everybody was to be made to work, no one was to have to do it too long, so that all might have time to learn to use and inform their minds. Just at that time many people were being turned out of their small farms, because the price of wool had become so high that the owners of the land wanted to turn it into large sheep-farms. The wool was still made into cloth in Flanders; so More proposed that woollen manufactures should be begun in England, "so that honest work may be found for those whom want had made thieves, or will make thieves before long." But it was a hundred years before this good thing was done.

The best thing for which More stood out, was the right of all to hold and follow their own religious belief, and to do the things they thought right. In the land of "Nowhere" every one was allowed to worship according to his own conscience, and no one was to try to force him to do otherwise; though people might try to persuade others, if they thought them mistaken. This is called "liberty of conscience," and we shall see that, if it had been sooner followed,

it would have saved much misery and bloodshed during the next hundred years in England. Even More himself did not always follow it, and he lost his own life because others disregarded it. It seemed a great pity that so noble a man should be "evil spoken of for good deeds, and should have to suffer to the death for them." But it is to such brave men and women that we owe our present privileges, and we should never forget their courage and their generous sacrifices, which have made Britain to-day, as the poet Tennyson wrote—

——“the land that freemen till,
That sober-suited Freedom chose,
The land where, girt by friends or foes,
A man may speak the thing he will.”

CHAPTER XXVIII

CARDINAL WOLSEY AND THOMAS CROMWELL

1534-1540

THERE could scarcely be a greater contrast between the life and spirit of two men, than between those of Sir Thomas More and Cardinal Wolsey. For the one lived to serve God and his fellow-men, while the other, with some high aims, lived mainly to serve himself and his King. He succeeded in doing both to a great degree, by devoting himself to serve and flatter young King Henry the Eighth.

As a boy he was known as Thomas Wolsey, the son of a tradesman at the town of Ipswich, and was so clever a lad that at Oxford he was called "the boy bachelor," and Bishop Fox of Winchester took him into the King's service. He was twenty years older than the King, but he took much trouble to please him; and as Henry was very fond of fun and flattery, Wolsey joined in the dances and pastimes with which he and his ladies amused themselves, and flattered him to his heart's content. His friends used to chaff him about this, but he gained his end, for he soon became a great favourite with the King, and they were as great friends as Henry II and Thomas à Becket used to be. By and by he, like Becket, became Chancellor, and proved a very

clever and diligent one. The King gave him one Bishopric after another, and at last made him Archbishop of York ; and he did not, like Becket, object to be Archbishop and Chancellor at once. The King's gifts made him very rich indeed, as well as powerful, and as he, too, liked pomp and grandeur, he went about in great state, and had a household of five hundred persons, with nobles and bishops in his train. He had two splendid palaces—York House, afterwards called Whitehall, and Hampton Court, near London, which also became a royal palace, and is one of the sights of England.

Wolsey spent his wealth royally, however, in founding a large school for boys, at his native town of Ipswich, and he gave to Oxford one of its finest colleges, then called Cardinal College, but now famous as Christchurch. His pride, as well as his love of money, was boundless, and when the Pope sent a messenger to make him a Cardinal, his reception of the honour at Westminster was as grand as if it had been the coronation of a king. For ten years he ruled both Church and State, in the King's name, and, through this, the English grew accustomed to the idea of the King having the whole power in both.

One good thing Wolsey did for England, in keeping it out of war for seven years. When Henry began to reign, he seemed, like his father, to wish for peace, and wanted to be friends with the Kings of Scotland, France and Spain, as well as the Emperor of Germany. It was a pity that Henry did not keep this good resolution, but the Pope, then at war with France, tempted him with the hope of getting back the old possessions of England there, and got him secretly to join Spain and Germany against France. When he began to



WOLSEY.

From a painting by Holbein in the Collection at Christ Church, Oxford.

prepare for war, his counsellors objected that as England was an island, it would be better for it to make conquests by sea than by land, as it has done so often since then. But Henry was determined on his own plan, and even the people seemed pleased with the idea of again making the English arms famous in France. Henry, however, was deceived by his allies, who were thinking only of their own schemes; and all his expensive preparations ended in a sort of skirmish which was called the "Battle of the Spurs," because the French cavalry—seized with a panic—used their spurs to make their horses run away. The English thus won easily, and took their General and a number of officers prisoners of war. One of these was a French duke, who in England became very intimate with Henry, and through him it was arranged that the King of France should marry Henry's sister, the Princess Mary. As her husband, Louis XII of France, died a few months later, she became Queen Dowager of France, and afterwards married the Duke of Suffolk in England.

Soon after this Battle of the Spurs, Henry met with a great disappointment. The Emperor Maximilian, the head of the German Empire, died in 1519, and Charles of Spain, Henry of England and Francis the First of France, each hoped to be elected Emperor in his place. Charles V was chosen, and now became the greatest ruler in Europe. Henry, being disappointed and angry, was ready to listen to Francis, when he asked him to join him in making war on Charles. England had now what is called "the balance of power," for both sides wished for her help, and it took all Wolsey's crafty skill to keep out of war, by seeming

to be sometimes on one side and sometimes on the other.

But the Emperor Charles paid Henry the compliment of visiting him, on his way from Spain to meet the King of France. He rode with the King to Canterbury, where he met his aunt, Queen Katharine, and agreed with Henry that he would marry their young daughter, Mary Tudor—a promise which he never kept. Soon after this, King Henry and Wolsey went over to France to hold a grand meeting with Francis, who had arranged everything for the occasion, with the utmost splendour. The King, Queen and Cardinal were attended by a great train of gentlemen, ladies and servants, and some of the nobles spent so much more than they could afford, in preparing for the event, that they were said to carry “their castles, woods and farms on their backs.” Wolsey had a train of eight hundred followers, all dressed in crimson velvet, with gold chains round their necks ; and his pomp and state were said to be no less than that of the King himself.

An immense palace, built of wood, had been prepared for the royal visitors, and was splendidly adorned within and without. The rooms were lined with rich hangings of silk, embroidered with flowers in gold, and Turkey carpets, now beginning to be used there, covered the floors. So many of the tents in which the nobles lived were covered with cloth of gold, that this meeting has ever since been called the “Field of the Cloth of Gold.” A fountain at the gate was always flowing with red and white wine, and all kinds of people, including vagabonds and beggars, crowded in to eat and drink, and lay about drunk, in heaps, amidst all the finery and grandeur,

The King of France with his Queen and gay court, lodged at Ardres, a town close by, and there Wolsey spent two days in arranging matters of little importance. Francis wished to have Henry for a real friend, but found it hard to get near him on account of his guards, and all the formalities of state. One morning he rose very early, and rode over to see King Henry, whom he found fast asleep. He drew aside his curtains and awoke him, to Henry's great surprise. "You have gained a victory over me, my dear brother," he said,—“I yield myself your prisoner, and plight you my faith.” Henry then took off his rich collar of pearls, and begged Francis to wear it for his sake, which Francis promised to do, on condition that Henry should wear a bracelet, which he clasped on his arm. We should think it strange, now, to see kings wearing pearl collars and gold bracelets, but that was the fashion in those days. It was a pity, however, that these two kings could not have kept up the friendship they then expressed.

But only the next year, Henry was persuaded by Charles V to begin war with France in the old hope of getting back what he called his “lost territory,” while Wolsey was told that he should become Pope some day, as he much desired. In the seven years of peace, the Parliament had never once been called together. But now Wolsey had to call it, in order to procure money for the war, and he asked the Commons to agree to a very heavy tax. He went to them himself in his grand robes of state and red Cardinal's hat, with all the pomp of his office, and made a long speech against Francis, with whom he had seemed so friendly. But the Commons did not want war, and no one would

answer. Sir Thomas More, who was Speaker, said he could do nothing without the consent of the Commons, but he persuaded them to give half of what the King asked. But Henry and Wolsey were so much displeased with the conduct of the Parliament, that they would not call another for seven years. Even this tax was very hard for the people to bear, so that cloth-makers and farmers could no longer pay to their men the wages on which they had to live.

The war which then began did France much harm, and brought no good to Henry and England. Henry did not get back the possessions he hoped for, and Wolsey did not become Pope. When the war was over, the King had nothing to do but amuse himself, and out of this came much trouble. For he fell in love with a gay and beautiful young lady named Anne Boleyn, a niece of the Duke of Norfolk, who had lately appeared at court. He had never cared much for his good Queen Katharine, and as all her children had died except the Princess Mary, he had begun to think that, perhaps, it had not been right to marry his brother's widow. And as the former Pope had had to give a special permission for it, he thought he would try to get this taken back, and then he would be free to marry Anne Boleyn. Most of the English clergy and people were opposed to this, but Henry and Anne Boleyn's friends tried hard to persuade the Pope to say that the Queen was not the King's lawful wife. Pope Clement did not think this right, and he also did not wish to displease Charles V, who was the Queen's nephew. Wolsey did not know what to do now, as he did not desire either to offend the King or to disobey the Pope; and he tried, in several ways, to get the

Pope's consent to Henry's will. The matter dragged on for four years, and at last the Pope sent his messenger to try the case with Wolsey in England. Now Henry hoped that he was about to succeed, but Queen Katharine, who had always been a good wife to Henry, would have nothing to do with the trial, and soon the Pope stopped it altogether.

Then Henry, who could not endure to have his will thus crossed, was furious with Wolsey, for he thought he had given way too much to the Pope, instead of carrying out his wishes. Anne Boleyn and her friends were very angry, also, and wished to drive Wolsey away from court. And though Henry had been quite willing that Wolsey should act on behalf of the Pope, he now declared that because he did this, and thus acknowledged another power in the Kingdom, all that he possessed was forfeit to the King. He sent the Dukes of Norfolk and Suffolk to take from him his Chancellors' Great Seal, which he now gave to Sir Thomas More, and to command him to leave his fine palace of York Place, and go to a quiet country-house called Ashur. Wolsey tried to pacify the King by giving up to him at once both his splendid palaces, with the abundance of gold and silver plate and rich and costly stuffs which they contained.

The river was covered with boats full of people expecting to see the Cardinal taken to the Tower, but, instead of this, he went in his barge to his palace at York, where his clergy gave him a warm welcome. But this quiet did not last long, for his enemies were busy, and he had made many of them by his pride and love of show. One day the Earl of Northumberland arrived at York, and met the Cardinal with a

troubled face. "My Lord Cardinal," he said sadly, "I arrest you on the charge of high treason!" This was a crushing blow, and as Wolsey had been ill for some time, he had not strength to bear it. Though he was hardly able to sit straight on his mule, he set out at once with the Earl on his last journey. At the Abbey of Leicester his weakness forced him to stop to rest, and as he reached the gate, he said feebly to the monks who came out with their torches to welcome him,—“My brethren, I am come to lay my bones among you!” He was only sixty, but trouble had worn him out, and he died there soon after.

Shakespeare has given us a picture of his last days, and of his words to his faithful friend and servant, Thomas Cromwell—

“I charge thee, Cromwell, throw away ambition.
By that sin fell the angels.”. . . “Oh Cromwell, Cromwell!
Had I but served my God with half the zeal
I served my king, He would not, in mine age,
Have left me naked to mine enemies!”

This Thomas Cromwell must not be confused with Oliver Cromwell of the next century, who was quite opposite in his aims and actions; for *he* worked to save England from oppression, and this Cromwell worked to get it enslaved to the power of a tyrant King. The best thing we know about this Cromwell is that he was faithful to his master in his misfortunes, and pleaded for him with the King. But his rule was a rule of terror for England, for all who dared to oppose his will, or that of King Henry, were speedily hanged, beheaded or burned.

It is said that Cromwell, who had been a soldier, and had lived long in Italy, first gained favour with the

King by advising him to take his own way about the marriage he wished to make, and refuse any longer to acknowledge the Pope's power in England. The King then proclaimed himself the "Supreme Lord and Head of the Church in England," and frightened its clergy into submission. He married Anne Boleyn privately, and got from Dr. Cranmer, the new Archbishop of Canterbury, a decree declaring that—as Cranmer truly believed—his first marriage had been no marriage at all. So poor Queen Katharine had to go away from court, to live in some quiet retreat, and died about three years after, leaving to Henry a letter declaring her continued affection for him.

Anne Boleyn was crowned Queen with great splendour at Westminster Abbey, to which she was drawn in a white chariot with a golden canopy, by two white ponies with white damask coverings that swept the ground. With her beautiful fair hair and rose-leaf complexion, set off by her shining robe of silver tissue, she seemed indeed the most beautiful lady in England. But only four years after, poor Queen Anne was put away as Queen Katharine had been, and sent to be beheaded in the Tower, to make room for a new wife, whom King Henry married the next day.

As Henry had now proclaimed himself Lord of both Church and State, he claimed the right to order all the people to believe just what he believed, and to worship God in the way he thought best. But as he changed his mind on these matters, at different times, it would have been impossible for his subjects always to obey him. Cromwell got a law passed which made it not only treason for anybody to deny that the King was supreme—but it was also treason not to be able to

say that they believed it. And Sir Thomas More and the good Bishop Fisher were beheaded because they could not agree to do this.

By this time many of the abbeys and monasteries had fallen back greatly from what they had been at first. And though a number of them were still good schools for the children of the country gentlemen, a great many were considered useless, or even worse ; so the Parliament determined that most of them should be shut up, and their property handed over to the King. But still some of the great abbeys had been left. There was one school called the Charterhouse, in London, built on the old burial-ground which had been bought for the people who died of the Black Death. These monks were called " Carthusians," and they were much loved and esteemed for their goodness and charity. They had agreed to submit to the King, but they could not say " yes " to all the questions that were asked them, so the King and Cromwell condemned them for treason, and took their property. But they would not say what they did not believe, and thus they had much comfort in being *true*. Three of them were hanged as if they had been criminals, and the rest were shut up in a foul dungeon, chained to posts, where they soon died of fever and starvation. Such things as these showed how much more cruel and wicked Henry became as he grew older, and was more determined to do whatever he pleased.

Many of the English people were very angry with the King for his cruelties, especially in the north, where the nobles were so brave and warlike. At one time, thirty thousand tall men on horseback set out to hold a Parliament of their own, to insist that Henry should

undo the wrongs he had done and put away his bad adviser Cromwell. But Cromwell managed, by false promises in the King's name, to persuade them to lay down their arms. As soon as they were in his power, he had a number of the nobles and many others put to death. Even noble ladies were burned at the stake or beheaded. One of these was the last of the Plantagenet line, Margaret, Countess of Salisbury, daughter of the Duke of Clarence who was murdered in the Tower by Edward IV. The Countess was condemned to die because one of her sons, who lived at Rome, took part with the Pope against Henry, and she continued to write to him.

Cromwell had spies everywhere, and the slightest words were often held as treason, for which people might suffer death. One of the northern nobles told Cromwell that although he seemed to wish to have all the noblest heads in the kingdom struck off, he hoped there would yet remain one, to strike off Cromwell's own. It was not very long before these words came true. His power had long defied the people, for he frightened the Parliaments he called into doing his will, but his "Reign of Terror" came to an end at last. As Wolsey had displeased Henry by lack of zeal in promoting the marriage he wished, so Cromwell displeased him by getting for him a fourth wife whom he did not like. And then, at last, the Lords had their revenge. The Duke of Norfolk tore the riband of the Garter from his breast, and arrested him for treason. He was quickly taken to the Tower and beheaded, and thus his tyranny at last—and as usual—came back on his own head.

CHAPTER XXIX

CRANMER AND THE NEW ERA

1540-1558

THE death of Henry the Eighth and the short reign of young Edward seemed to open up a new era for England. For there were now two sets of people in the kingdom, people who believed in the old ways in which they had been used to worship, and people who believed in those which Wyckliffe had preached. These people were now called "Protestants," and, like the old Lollards, they read and studied the Bible. Henry the Eighth had had a new English Bible published, which was made partly from that of Wyckliffe, and partly from the New Testament translated into English by a clergyman named William Tyndale. This good man, when he read the Greek New Testament prepared by Erasmus, was determined that the English ploughboy should soon know more of the Scriptures than the learned men of his own time. He found that he could not do this work in peace in England, and went over to Germany, from which six thousand copies of his English New Testament were sent to England. Some of these were burned before Wolsey in St. Paul's churchyard, because he did not like some notes which Tyndale had put in; but many copies were read and studied. King Henry's English

Bible, published in 1538, contained the New Testament of Tyndale, though revised by Miles Coverdale, a friend of Cranmer; and the King did not wish that everybody should have it to read. Copies of it were placed in the churches, chained up, so that they could not be taken away, and only the ministers and learned people could read them. But every father of a family and every schoolmaster was ordered to teach the Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments and the Apostles' Creed to his children or scholars, and this was a great advance from the ignorance of former years.

But there was much contention between the two sets of people in England, and as there were rough and ignorant people in both, there were many rough and wrong things done. Each set wanted the other to think and worship as they themselves did, and sometimes people were so rude and unkind as to laugh at what others believed sacred; and this was very wrong and foolish, for it makes the worst quarrels of all. Then King Henry said that certain things must be believed, and those who would not do so must be punished as criminals, and even burned. About five hundred were accused in London alone; but Cromwell, who did not approve of this, got the King to pardon them, and so prevented that cruel law from being then put into force.

At times, however, there were very cruel things done. Not long before the death of Henry, a good woman named Anne Askew was burned, with three companions, for believing differently from the King. Even Archbishop Cranmer was called in question for his belief, and good Bishop Latimer was examined before the council of nobles which had overthrown

Cromwell. We know how Archbishop Cranmer helped the King to get his divorce, and no doubt he did not think that the marriage with his brother's widow had been right ; but Cranmer, though a good man, was not brave by nature, and was very anxious to keep the peace. However, he helped to give the English Bible to the people, and established the use of the Prayer-Book and Communion Service of the Church of England. For neither he nor Bishop Latimer wished the Church to be any longer subject to the Pope.

Bishop Latimer was the son of a yeoman in Leicestershire, and he remembered—as a boy—buckling on his father's armour when he went to help in putting down a rebellion in the time of Henry VII. This good man rented a little farm for three or four pounds a year, and kept a hundred sheep and thirty cows, besides tilling as much land as kept half a dozen men. He brought up all his children, as the Bishop said, “in the fear of God,” and did what he could for his poor neighbours, and he kept his boy Hugh at school, and also taught him to be a good marksman with his bow. Hugh went to Cambridge at fourteen, and there studied under the teacher Linacre so hard as to injure his health and strength. But he was to be a great preacher rather than a great scholar. He was not at all afraid to speak the truth to the King. At one time he entreated him to have pity on his own soul, and remember that the day was coming when he would have to answer for the blood of those slain by his sword. He spoke plainly to both rich and poor, exhorting them to do all the duties of their daily life, and no doubt his preaching kept many in the right way at that stormy time. Sometimes his courage almost failed him, for he knew

he was in danger, and he said that, if he did not trust that God would help him, he might have been tempted to escape beyond sea. When he was threatened by a bishop, however, King Henry, who respected this good man, made him his own chaplain, and the trouble soon blew over. After Cranmer became Primate, Latimer became Bishop of Worcester, and did what he could to make the English clergy faithful to their duty.

When Henry the Eighth died, his only son Edward, who succeeded him, was but nine years old. He was at once solemnly crowned, when his duty to God and the people was nobly set forth by Archbishop Cranmer. He was very different from most of the kings who had come before him, for he did not care for pomp or pleasure or war ; but though he was only a little boy, he seemed to care most for loving and serving God, and for the welfare of his kingdom. He was gentle, merciful and thoughtful, and a very good scholar for his age ; for King Henry had always had good teachers for his children, and both the Princesses Mary and Elizabeth knew Latin and Greek, and other languages besides. It seems as if the young King might have grown to be something like King Alfred ; but during the seven years that he was said to reign, the kingdom was really ruled by " Protectors " or Guardians, and Edward had to do what they thought best. The first " Protector " was Lord Hertford, the brother of his dead mother, who became Duke of Somerset, and as his other uncle, Admiral Seymour, wanted to become Protector, instead, Edward had to consent to his being beheaded, for the peace of the kingdom.

As Somerset and Archbishop Cranmer were of the same mind, some of the severe and bad laws of Henry's

reign were now done away with. People were no longer to be punished for being Lollards, or for worshipping in the new way. The clergy were to be allowed to marry, and the English Book of Common Prayer was put into its present form. But Cranmer had not learned to see that people should not be persecuted for their religious belief, and many were now punished by death for beliefs that he thought wrong. In Devonshire and Cornwall, these changes in Church laws were not liked, and there was still much discontent among the people, who were turned out of their farms by the rich, so that ten thousand men rose and defeated the King's troops, at Norwich ; though, after a short time, they were subdued, and some four thousand men were supposed to have perished by the sword or the hangman. But Somerset offended a good many of the nobles, partly because they thought he was too kind to the poor people who were suffering, and partly because he lived in great state, and had built a grand house in London—still called Somerset House—for the building of which three houses and a church had to be pulled down. So at last they forced him to give up his charge of the kingdom, and put in the Earl of Warwick in his place ; and the poor young King had to order the death of this uncle also.

It must have been a lonely life for him, with no father or mother to care for him, while, his two sisters were a good deal older than he was, and the elder one, the Princess Mary, still believed in the old ways of worship, and did not like the things done in her brother's name. But he had a girl-cousin very near his own age, who studied under the same teachers, and learned even faster than he did ; and as she also loved and

served God, he liked to meet and talk with her. This was Lady Jane Grey, the daughter of the Duke of Suffolk, and granddaughter of King Henry's younger sister, whose first husband had been the King of France. King Henry had appointed Lady Jane to be the next heir to the English throne, after King Edward and the two Princesses, but no one thought it likely that she would ever be Queen. And Lady Jane did not think about it herself, for she loved reading and study and music and painting, much better than grandeur and show. One day when all her friends were out on a gay hunting expedition, she was found by her tutor sitting quietly at home, reading a famous Greek book, which she enjoyed much more than such sports. When she was about sixteen, she was married to Lord Guilford Dudley, son of the Duke of Northumberland—as the Earl of Warwick was now called ; and as young Edward had been for some time ill, he was planning for her to be Queen in case of his death. But of this she herself had no thought.

The Duke of Northumberland did not make a better ruler than Somerset had done, though one good thing was done in his time, in the founding of eighteen grammar schools. But though a great deal of land and property had been taken from the Church, the greedy nobles had managed to get so much of it, that there was very little money in the King's Treasury ; and the nobles were still quarrelling among themselves, when it became clear that the young King, now about sixteen, was growing weaker, and must soon die. Northumberland watched over him to the last, and had no difficulty in persuading him to make a will, leaving the kingdom to his dear cousin Lady Jane Grey, who, he thought,

would be a better queen for England than either of his sisters. Of course he had no right to upset King Henry's settlement without the consent of the people ; but he was probably too ill to think of that. He died praying, with his last breath, for the welfare of England ; and the people, who loved him for his goodness, were much grieved that he could not live to rule himself.

As soon as King Edward was dead, Lady Jane's father, the Duke of Suffolk, and her father-in-law the Duke of Northumberland, came to tell her that she was now to be Queen. She fainted when she heard what was very sad news to her, and at first refused to hear of being made queen while the two princesses were alive. But her father and husband, and her other friends, urged her so much, that at last she gave way, and was proclaimed Queen by the Council in London.

This consent proved the ruin of herself and all her family. For though many people would have liked so good and lovely and wise a Queen as Lady Jane, they did *not* like Northumberland, who had caused the Protector Somerset to be beheaded ; and they thought he would be the real ruler of the kingdom. There was a great rising in the eastern counties against him, and though he went, with ten thousand men, to put it down, the Londoners stood silent and sullen, and none bade him " God-speed." When the other nobles of the Council saw this they changed their minds, and proclaimed the Princess Mary Queen ; and as Northumberland saw that the people would not support him against her, he thought that he had better give way, and shout with his men—" Long live Queen Mary ! "

It was a great pity that the English people were set upon having Mary for their Queen ; for hers was a

very unhappy reign for both England and herself, and so many people were put to death, by her orders, chiefly for their religion, that she has ever since been known as "Bloody Mary." She was very determined and very revengeful, for she thought her mother, Queen Katharine, had been ill-treated, and she seemed incapable of pity. One of the first things she did was to send Lady Jane Grey and her young husband to the Tower, though she knew that Lady Jane had only obeyed the wishes of her parents. The Queen kept them shut up there for nearly eight months, without allowing them to see each other, and then ordered that they should both be beheaded. You may still see, in the Tower of London, the barred window through which Lady Jane saw her husband led out to execution on Tower Hill, and his dead body brought back in a cart. She wrote a farewell letter to her father, in which she said—"My guiltless blood may cry before the Lord,—mercy to the Innocents,"—and she left her Greek Testament to her sister Catherine, with a letter written in Greek on its blank leaf. When she was taken to be beheaded, on the same spot where Anne Boleyn and another Queen named Katharine Howard had met the same fate, she spoke kindly to those about her, and told them that she had never intended to do wrong in taking the crown left her by her cousin. And many people must have wished that she could have been Queen instead of her cruel cousin Mary.

The Queen was determined to bring England again under the rule of the Pope, and to punish all who opposed this. She upset everything that had been done under her brother's reign. She sent the married clergy away from their parishes, would not allow the

new Prayer-Book to be used, put back the bishops who were opposed to the Protestants, and sent Archbishop Cranmer and Bishop Latimer to the Tower. Even her sister, Princess Elizabeth, was sent there too, and was only saved from death by the Council. And she put again in force the cruel laws which forbade people from worshipping in any way but that which she appointed.

But the worst thing of all for England was, that she determined to marry her cousin Philip of Spain, son of the Emperor Charles V, who had broken his promise to marry her himself. Philip was now doing all he could to restore the power of the Pope over the countries where he ruled, and in Flanders, where the people were much opposed to it, he had already done very cruel things. And though he was willing to promise that the English people should manage their own affairs, the idea of the cruel and bigoted Philip becoming the husband of their Queen, was greatly dreaded by those who wished to see England free. There was more than one revolt in consequence, which greatly enraged Mary, so that—as soon as she was able—she took a terrible revenge. At the leaders, and many of the followers in these risings, were executed as traitors, and it was then that she put to death Lady Jane Grey and her relatives. When she got Parliament unwillingly to agree to her marriage with Philip, it took place in Winchester Cathedral, where they still keep the chair on which she sat. The royal couple spent the first days after their marriage at Wolvesey Palace, where memories of King Alfred still lingered. But Mary's ideas of reigning were very different from his. This marriage, on which she had set her heart, turned out a very unhappy one, for Philip soon showed that he had no

affection for her, and treated her with great neglect. He never stayed long with her, and at last, in spite of her tears and entreaties, he left her and England altogether. Perhaps, though he was so cruel himself, he did not like a wife who could be so cruel and revengeful.

The last three years of Queen Mary's short reign were full of greater cruelties than any one could remember in England, for during that time it was said that about three hundred men and women were burned to death, because they could not believe and worship just as Queen Mary did, though they loved God and tried to serve Christ. Among these was the good Bishop Latimer, who had preached so boldly to King Henry. He was as brave now, for he was not afraid to die for his faith. And when he was about to be burned beside another good Bishop named Ridley, he said cheerfully, amid the flames—"Play the man, Master Ridley, we shall this day light such a candle by God's grace in England as I trust shall never be put out!" Bishop Hooper of Gloucester was just as brave, and died in the act of thanking God for giving him strength to speak the truth and to do what he believed right. Others who suffered nobly were a clergyman of St. Paul's named Rogers, and Rowland Tayler, Vicar of Hadleigh,—burned in his own parish before his own people, who wept over his fate, and prayed to God to strengthen and comfort him, though he was not allowed to speak to them.

Finally Archbishop Cranmer was condemned to be burned, by order of the Pope himself, for even the Queen did not dare to condemn an Archbishop. He wished so much to live, that he was willing to promise

even to submit to the Pope and go back to the old ways. But in spite of this, he had to die, and then he told the people at Oxford, where he was burned, that he deeply repented having professed to give up "the truth which he believed in his heart," in order to save his life. And he put his right hand first into the flames because it was the hand which had written what he did not believe ; and held it there steadily until it was burned. And he was so brave at the last, that the people about him said he " never stirred nor cried till life was gone."

Thus nobly did men and women die in those sad times, for conscience sake, and for the freedom of the Church of Christ in England. In the market-square of Smithfield, where most of these martyrs suffered, there is a large stone tablet which records their faith and constancy, and close beside it there is an ancient church called St. Bartholomew, bui't in the time of Stephen, where people worship to-day, as they have done for centuries, in the way for which these martyrs died.

Queen Mary's reign ended, as it deserved to do, in disappointment and failure. She had brought England into a war with France to help Philip, who was now King over his father's dominions. But instead of gaining anything for England, the war ended with the loss of her last possession in France, the city of Calais which Edward III had taken after so hard a siege. Queen Mary, who died soon after, grieved so much for its loss, that she said " the name of Calais would be found written on her heart ! "

CHAPTER XXX

THE STORY OF MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS

1561-1586

THERE could hardly have been two people more unlike than the two queens named Mary, who were living at the same time—Mary Tudor of England and Mary Stuart Queen of Scots. Both of them were much attached to old ways in religion and wished to uphold the rule of the Pope in their kingdoms, but Mary of England, who was so unloving and cruel, has had none to admire her and few to make excuses for her, while Mary Queen of Scots, beautiful and charming, seemed for a long time to be Queen of hearts also; though her life had a sad ending, partly through her faults and partly through her misfortunes.

In order to understand her interesting story, we must go back a little in that of Scotland. You remember how Perkin Warbeck, who said he was a brother of Edward V, went to Scotland, where the King, James IV, believed his story, and gave him his cousin for his wife, besides helping him against Henry. This James was married to the eldest sister of Henry VIII, and they lived in great splendour at Holyrood, for they both loved beautiful and costly things. King James used often to wear cloth of gold and silver, adorned with jewels,

and even his armour was studded with precious stones. For, by this time, Scotland was growing richer ; as the people now sold more wool and leather and fish, and had good ships also. One of these, the *Great Michael*, was the largest ship known at that time. There were now two universities in Scotland, St. Andrews and Glasgow, and in the reign of James IV another was founded, that of Aberdeen, so that the country was going forward in learning as well as in other things. The fourth—that of Edinburgh—was founded in the reign of James VI.

Sir Walter Scott has described James IV in his poem of *Marmion* :—

“ The Monarch’s form was middle size,
 For feat of strength or exercise
 Shaped in proportions fair.
 And hazel was his eagle eye,
 And auburn of the darkest dye
 His short curled beard and hair.
 His cloak, of crimson velvet, piled,
 Trimmed with the fur of marten wild ;
 His vest of changeful satin sheen,
 The dazzled eye beguiled ;
 His gorgeous collar hung adown
 Wrought with the badge of Scotland’s crown,
 The thistle brave of old renown ;
 White were his buskins ; on the heel,
 His spurs, inlaid with gold and steel ;
 His bonnet all of crimson fair,
 Was fastened with a ruby rare.”

But though King James liked splendour on state occasions, he liked also to go about his kingdom in a very different dress, sometimes in that of a farmer, and sometimes in that of a wandering beggar. He did this, partly because it enabled him to know more about

what was going on in his kingdom, and partly because it gave him pleasure to see the kind of life that the poorer people lived, and even to join in their pleasures and sports. He was fond of adventures of all sorts, which was one reason why he helped Perkin Warbeck. When his brother-in-law, Henry VIII, began war with France, King James wished to help France, which had always been friendly to Scotland. The Queen of France also wrote him a letter, saying that she chose him for her knight, as ladies used to do in tournaments, and that she wished him to ride into English ground and fight with the English King for her. This idea caught his fancy, and he sent for all his nobles to come with their men, and follow him into England. Though they had no quarrel with England then, and had no wish to go to war, the best part of the Scottish nobles and their followers did his bidding, and fought the English army under Surrey at a place called Flodden. Both armies fought all day, and when night came, they did not know which army had defeated the other. But in the morning the Scots found that they had suffered a great defeat, and that their good King lay dead on the field, with his brave young nobles lying in a ring around him, as they had fallen in trying to defend him. Sir Walter Scott describes this battle in *Marmion*, and tells how—here again—the English bowmen won the day with their “shafts as thick as snow,”—

“To break the Scottish circle deep,
That fought around their King,
Each stepping where his comrade stood
The instant that he fell,
Groom fought like noble, squire like knight,
As fearlessly and well!”

War is always sad and cruel, but there was never a sadder defeat than this of "Flodden Field," and the famous old ballad of "The Flowers of the Forest" tells us still how deeply Scotland mourned for the "flowers" of her manhood cut down so needlessly, without even any good reason for the battle.

Scotland missed her brave King much in the years that came after; for his son James was but two years old, and his mother, Queen Margaret Tudor, soon married the young Earl of Angus, the head of the strong Douglas family, which was not a happy marriage for her or for the people. The Duke of Albany, grandson of James II, tried to rule Scotland well for nine years, amid constant quarrels between the nobles, but at last he went back to France, where he liked best to live. The Earl of Angus, the stepfather of the young King, tried to keep him a sort of prisoner, till one day, when James was about sixteen, he managed to ride away from Falkland to Edinburgh Castle, disguised in the clothes of a groom. During his reign he tried to establish order in Scotland, and to make the fierce Gaelic clans in the North, as well as the rough Saxon Border Chiefs in the South, obedient to his just laws. Even those who boasted that they would obey neither King James nor King Henry, found that they had to obey King James.

Like his father, he loved adventures of all sorts, and many songs and ballads were written about these. Some he wrote himself, for he was like his father, also, in being something of a poet. And he had a great friend named David Lindsay, who was also a poet, and who used to play to him on his flute when James was a very little boy, and the King never forgot his kindness.

Scott's poem, "The Lady of the Lake," tells of the sort of adventures he had, and gives a picture of the life of that time. Though King James was stern to the proud nobles, he was kind to the people generally and looked after their good in many ways. As the north coast of Scotland was a dangerous one for sailors, he made a journey round it to mark all the points of danger, and find safe harbours for his sailors, and he was much loved by his people, as he deserved to be.

But, like many other people, he had trouble with his uncle Henry VIII, who wanted him to come into England to discuss some plans of his. James did not wish to trust himself there, and Henry was so angry with him for not coming to the place appointed, that he sent his troops to invade Scotland. King James sent his army to meet the English one, as he was ill at the time, but it was twice defeated, and when the news came of the second defeat at Solway Moss, it seemed as if his heart was broken.

He had been twice married, the first time to the sweet and gentle Princess Magdalene, daughter of the King of France; but she lived only about six months, and afterwards he married another French lady, Mary of Guise—a very clever and proud family. Their first children, who were boys, died; and just after the defeat at Solway Moss, King James was told that he had a little daughter. He said very sadly—"It came with a lass, and it will go with a lass!" The crown had come to the Stuart line through Marjory Bruce, and he thought it would go from it, now, when there was only a baby girl left to be its ruler.

Soon after this he died, in 1542, when only thirty-one years of age. The poor little "lass," whose coming

was so unwelcome, was the beautiful and ill-fated Mary Queen of Scots.

But though she was only a week old when her father died, the tiny Queen was carefully watched over and guarded as a precious treasure. Like Edward I in a similar case, King Henry was most anxious to get her into his own hands, and to bring her up to be the wife of his youngson Edward VI, which would have been a very good thing if it could have happened, for then England and Scotland would have been peacefully united, and much warfare and misery might have been prevented. But the Scots did not like England or Henry, and the King was, as usual, very high-handed. In his anger at not getting his plan carried out, he twice sent an army to invade Scotland; and both Edinburgh and the rich sea-port of Leith were burned and plundered, and a large part of the country laid waste. In these savage raids, several churches and abbeys were plundered and destroyed. Among them were Dryburgh and Melrose, which are now famous and beautiful ruins. After Henry's death, the Duke of Somerset made the same sort of plundering raid, and defeated the Scots with great slaughter in the battle of Pinkie, so the Scots naturally dreaded and hated the English more than ever.

Meantime, the little Queen was passing a happy childhood at a convent on a little island in a pretty Scottish lake, to which she had been sent for safety. She had four little girls of her own age and name to play with, who were afterwards her companions, and known as "the Queen's Maries;" and one part of the garden of this place is still called "Queen Mary's Garden."

But her mother, Mary of Guise, feared that the Eng-

lish might some day come and carry her off, so she determined to send her to France, to live there till she grew up. Some French ships came into the river Clyde and took her away, and she was more fortunate than James I, for the English knew nothing of her departure.

Mary of Guise had many disputes with the lords and leaders of the Scottish people, for by this time many of them were Protestants, like so many of the English ; and as she had brought many French soldiers into Scotland, they were alarmed lest she should try to make it subject to France as well as to the Pope. They asked and received help from England, and a large number of them bound themselves by an agreement called a "Covenant," that they would unite to protect all Protestants. They felt they needed to do this, for already some of them were being condemned to death for their belief. One of the chief friends of Mary of Guise was Cardinal Beatoun, a proud and able man, who put to death a good and faithful preacher named George Wishart, who preached to the Scottish people in much the same way as Latimer did in England. About twenty years before, this Cardinal's elder brother had put to death young Patrick Hamilton, who had come home from Switzerland to preach the same truths. And this Beatoun was so much hated for his cruelty, that a young man named Norman Leslie, with some of his friends, forced their way into his castle and put him to death, afterwards escaping safely to France.

Wishart had a young friend, called John Knox, who would have been willing to die with him, but Wishart wanted him to live and be useful to Scotland, instead. He became a great preacher, and went about through Scotland preaching, with great power, the same gospel

that Wishart had taught ; and everywhere the rich and poor, nobles and peasants, listened to him eagerly. But the rougher people began to pull down some of the fine old churches, because of the things which had been taught there ; and this was a great pity, as well as foolish and wrong.

As soon as Mary Queen of Scots was old enough, her mother persuaded the Scottish Parliament to let her be married to the young Dauphin (or prince) who became soon after, by his father's death, King Francis II. And as Mary was Queen of Scotland also, the French Cardinals, who were brothers of Mary of Guise, wished to claim for the young couple the Kingdom of England too. This claim on the part of Queen Mary was a great misfortune to her all her life, keeping her from ever being friends with her cousin Elizabeth ; for she was taught to think that she, and not Elizabeth, should be Queen of England. Mary's mother, the Queen-Regent, died soon after her daughter's marriage. She had tried to rule the kingdom well, and latterly had shown herself wise and gentle, giving some good advice to the Scotch lords before her death, in urging them to try to make peace in the kingdom. Soon after the young Queen thus lost her mother, she lost her husband also, and the old Queen Catherine of France, who had been jealous of her beauty, was not at all kind to the young widow. Therefore Queen Mary made up her mind, with much regret, to leave France, where she had been so happy, and come back to her own kingdom of Scotland, which she could scarcely remember. She was so sorry to leave France, that she had her couch placed on the deck of the ship, so that she might still see it again in the early morning ; and when she at last



MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS.

From the Original in the Collection of the Right Hon. the Earl of Morton.

saw it fading from her sight in the distance, she wept at losing sight of her "beautiful France." She thought—truly enough—that she should never be so happy anywhere again.

The Scottish people were delighted with their young Queen, who was only nineteen, and so gracious and charming, as well as so beautiful, that at first she seemed to win all hearts. She had the Tudor obstinacy hidden under the Stuart passion and grace, and the French gaiety and brightness that came to her through her mother. She was almost as clever as Elizabeth, and much more winning in her manner, and the two Queens, who were cousins, should have been fast friends. But they had been brought up so differently that their ideas of what was right and best were quite opposite, and Queen Elizabeth, who was older than Queen Mary, knew very well that she was the next heir to her kingdom, and used to interfere with her affairs more than the Queen of Scots liked. John Knox talked a great deal with her, and gave her much wise counsel, though she sometimes was offended by his plain speaking. She was determined to bring the kingdom of Scotland back to obey the Pope ; but she found that most of the people were now Protestants, and would not even have bishops any longer. Her half-brother, the Earl of Murray, was a strong and able man, and did all he could to make things easy for her at first ; and she granted him many favours, so that for a time they were very good friends.

Three or four years after Queen Mary returned to Scotland she determined to marry her cousin Henry Darnley, who was the grandson of her own grandmother Queen Margaret, by her second marriage.

Queen Elizabeth did not like this marriage, nor did the Earl of Murray and other Scotch nobles, but the Queen would have her way. Darnley was handsome and pleasing in manner, but so silly that it was not long before Mary got tired of him. She had a favourite Italian musician named David Rizzio, whom she used to consult about the affairs of the kingdom, and whom Darnley and some of the Scottish nobles very much disliked. One evening, when Rizzio was sitting with the Queen and her ladies at supper in Holyrood Palace, Darnley and some of the nobles burst into the room by a private stair, and, in spite of the Queen's commands, Rizzio was dragged away and murdered in an outer room. It was a terrible deed, and a shameful insult to Queen Mary, and it is no wonder that she could not forgive Darnley for his share in it. She fled from Edinburgh to Dunbar, where the strong Earl of Bothwell joined her with an army of 8,000 men, at the head of which she marched to Edinburgh to punish the murderers, who however made their escape across the border.

Not long after this event, Mary's only son was born, who afterwards became James Sixth of Scotland and First of England. There was rejoicing in Scotland, but very soon a terrible thing happened. Darnley, who had grown more foolish and wicked, was taken ill with smallpox near Glasgow. The Queen visited him there, and persuaded him to follow her to Edinburgh, where she lodged him in a solitary house, not far from Holyrood Palace. One night, shortly after, while Mary was taking part in a wedding dance at Holyrood, a terrible explosion shook the city, and the people rushed out to find the house in which Darnley had lain a mass of ruins, with his dead body beside it. It was

soon believed that the Earl of Bothwell had planned the deed, but though he went through the form of a trial, his followers assembled in such force that no one dared to find him guilty. Soon after that, Queen Mary was carried off as she was riding to Linlithgow, and was immediately married to Bothwell. Then the people were so angry that they rose in arms against her. The Lords marched into Edinburgh, took the castle and the baby prince into their possession, and then went in pursuit of the Queen, who had fled with Bothwell to his strong castle of Dunbar. She and her guilty husband met their army at a place called Carberry Hill, but the Queen's men refused to fight, and she gave herself up as a prisoner, on getting a promise of safety for Bothwell, who rode away, never to return.

Queen Mary was brought back to Edinburgh by her angry Lords, in a sad plight, travel-worn and dusty, with her long hair hanging about her shoulders, amid many rude words from the people who had so lately welcomed her with shouts of joy. She was sent a prisoner to the Castle of Lochleven, on a small island in the midst of a lovely lake, a place where she used to enjoy hunting expeditions in happier days. There she was forced to sign a paper in which she gave up her crown to her little son James, now one year old, who was solemnly crowned as James VI; and her half-brother, who had first stood her friend, was appointed Governor of the kingdom.

After being a prisoner in Lochleven for nearly a year, Mary made her escape across the lake at night, in a boat, rowed by young William Douglas, a brother of the keeper of the castle. Her friends were waiting for her, and soon put her at the head of an army of 6,000 men,

among whom were some of the Scottish nobles. But they were defeated by an army under the Earls of Murray and Morton, at a place called Langside, near Glasgow. Then the Queen, attended by a few gentlemen, rode some sixty miles, till she reached the Solway Firth, between Scotland and England. She might have escaped safely to France ; but she chose to take refuge in England, in the hope of getting assistance from her cousin Elizabeth, or else of being some day placed on the English throne. Her friends entreated her not to venture there, but she would not listen to their advice and was taken in a small boat across the Firth to England—never to be free again !

Elizabeth at first professed to be friendly to her, and tried to arrange for her going back to Scotland ; and perhaps, if the two Queens could have met, they might have come to a better understanding. But they never saw each other, and Mary was kept a prisoner, first in one castle and then in another, for there were still many people in England who wished to bring it again under the power of the Pope, and they tried several plans to make Mary Queen, so that she might do this, as she much desired. After a time, Queen Elizabeth's Councillors saw that there was so much danger from this cause, that, at last, when they discovered a very bad plot to kill Elizabeth and put Mary on the throne, they insisted that the Queen of Scots must be condemned to death. Elizabeth seemed very unwilling to consent, and when she signed the paper at last, she threw it on the floor, leaving it to her Council to put in force.

Mary had now been nineteen years a prisoner in England, after a reign of six years in her own kingdom,

and for the last year she had been closely shut up in the Castle of Fotheringay. The castle hall was draped in black, and the still beautiful Queen was brought to the scaffold to die. Her hair had grown white during the last sad twenty years, but she bade a calm and kindly farewell to her weeping attendants, and met death with all the dauntless courage of her race.

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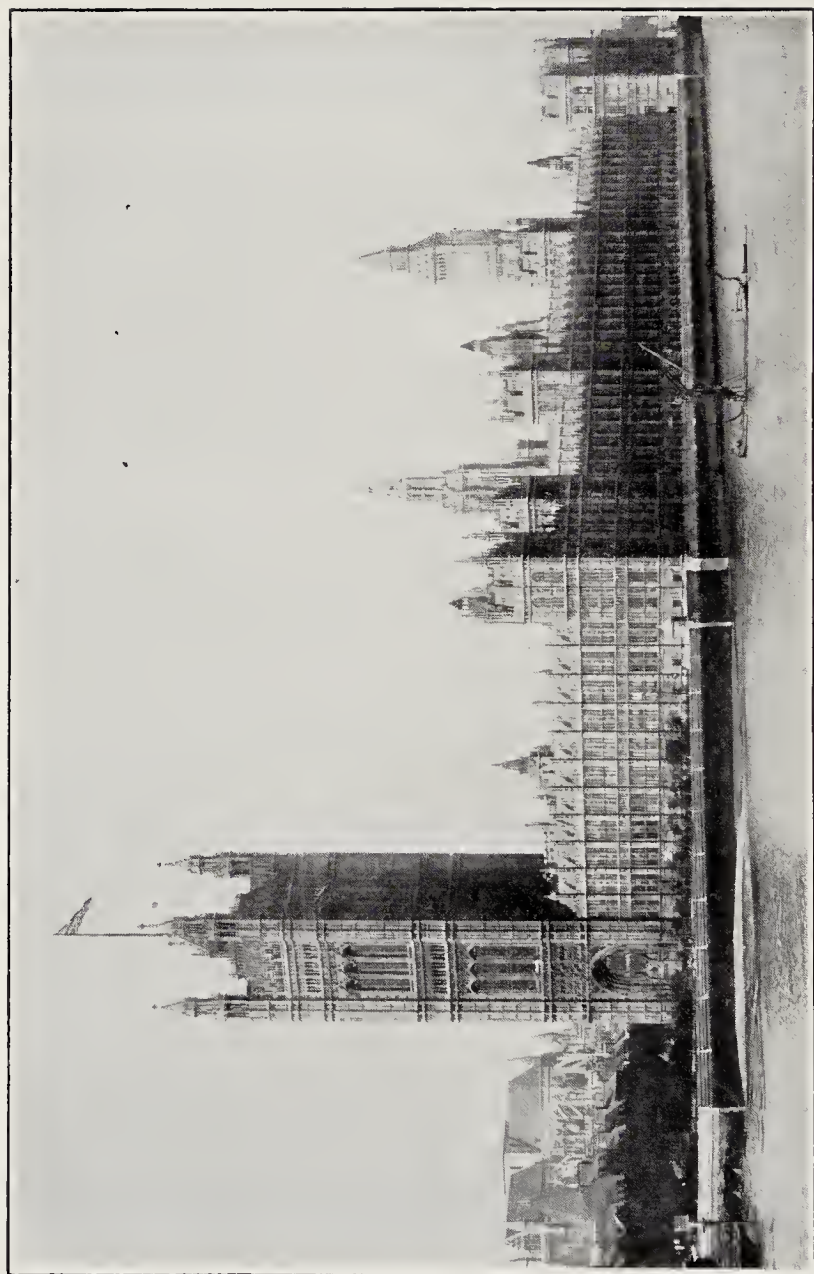


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HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT.

Frontispiece

STORIES OF
THE BRITISH EMPIRE

SECOND SERIES
GREATER BRITAIN

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QUEEN ELIZABETH.

From the picture by Zuccherò at Hatfield House.

STORIES OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE

CHAPTER XXXI

“GOOD QUEEN BESS” AND HER HEROES

1558-1603

THERE have been, in all, but five queens of England in their own right, and of these, three, at least, have been distinguished as good and wise rulers. We may not be able to think Queen Elizabeth as good and true in all things as our late beloved Queen Victoria, or Mary, the wife of William III; but, on the whole, she showed great sense and wisdom, and avoided the mistakes of her forefathers. She was seldom at odds with her Parliament, generally managing to secure one that would do what she wished. Though she was very imperious and plain-spoken, she loved England with all her heart, and studied carefully the good of the kingdom. She once said to her Parliament, “Nothing—no worldly thing under the sun—is so dear to me as the love and good-will of my subjects,” and at another time she said that she wished to gain obedience “by love, not compulsion.”

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This was a new tone in a sovereign of England then, and such words had not often been heard there since the days of King Alfred. There was great rejoicing in London town when the people saw Elizabeth ride from the Tower to Westminster Abbey for her coronation—a fine-looking young woman of twenty-five, with reddish hair and a royal air of command. She felt that she had a great work to do in England, and she meant to do it well. She found the country driven towards rebellion by bad government, and almost ruined by the war with France, in which, as we have seen, Calais was lost. But, amid great dangers and difficulties, she was determined to restore peace and order. Under the blessing of God she succeeded beyond her hopes, and left England the “Mistress of the Seas,” and a great power in Europe.

Yet there were some unhappy things in her reign, mainly in consequence of the great dispute concerning religion; and she did not always act wisely or truly or mercifully. But she lived in a stormy time, and as she chose a good adviser in Cecil, who was afterwards Lord Burleigh, she generally took his advice. King Philip of Spain wished to marry her, but she would not hear of such a match, nor would she make up her mind to marry one of the French princes, who would not care for England. She might have married one of the great English nobles, but this would have brought jealousies and troubles into the kingdom, so she preferred to reign as the “Maiden Queen,” by which name she has been often called. Her long reign has been styled a “glorious” one, because so many wonderful things happened in it, and so many great and clever men lived then, that it has been sometimes

called England's "Golden Age." For one thing, new countries were found and explored, and English seamen sailed far and wide, and brought home many new and precious things from America and India, and the islands called the West Indies, which made the life of the English people pleasanter and richer. Queen Elizabeth was very careful and thrifty, and did not ask for nearly such heavy taxes as her father had done, but she loved splendour and fine dresses, and was much pleased with the gold and silver and rich stuffs which her captains brought home from afar.

Then the home and family life of the English became much more comfortable and wholesome. The houses of stone or brick were built on a better plan, with many windows through which the sunshine could come in, much as Sir Thomas More had pictured the houses in the land of "Nowhere." Instead of the grim old castles meant for days of fighting, fine Manor houses or "Halls" were built, with many gables and turrets, and with beautiful gardens round them, which are still to be seen in England, and are called "Elizabethan." Inside, too, they were much more comfortable, for, instead of the old smoky hearth in the middle of the floor, there were cosy chimney corners, with great wide fireplaces, round which the family could sit during the long winter evenings, and this helped to make the English love "Sweet Home," as they do still. And instead of the straw or rushes with which the floors used to be covered—often hiding all sorts of rubbish—carpets or smooth waxed floors were used by all who could afford them, while much grand carved furniture was to be seen in many houses, instead of the old rude trestles and benches; and gold and silver cups and dishes

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replaced the plain wooden trenchers which used to satisfy most people in former days.

Another of More's ideas seemed to bear fruit in what was now done for the many poor people who had lost their farms and could not get work, so that want often turned them into thieves or rioters. Sometimes fifty of such men were hanged together, and two hundred heads had been seen at one time set up on London Bridge. The Queen and her advisers determined that something must be done to improve matters. What are called the English "poor-rates" were then established, by which every town and parish was made to help its own poor, and provide some employment for them, if they were able to work. This was the beginning of the English "workhouses," and though they were not always well or kindly managed, they at least helped to prevent the great evil and danger of leaving the poor to starve. Other things helped, however, to make their condition better, because many more useful things were now made in England, which gave employment to a great many people, while the land was better tilled and produced much more food. Manchester and Sheffield began to be known for the cloth and the cutlery for which each has become so famous. Then there were whole fleets of fishing boats all along the coast, in which were being trained the "Mariners of England" to win great victories for her Empire.

But the greatest thing in the reign of Elizabeth was the opening up of men's minds to new and great thoughts, and the stirring of their fancy by the wonderful tales brought back by brave travellers from distant lands. There had been little poetry written in England during

the stormy times since the days of Chaucer, though, as we know, there had been poets in Scotland, and many fine old ballads and songs lived on there. But now, in this time of peace and progress, there sprang up so many poets and singers of songs, that England was called at that time, a "Nest of Singing-Birds." Edmund Spenser's *Faerie Queen* was the first great poem since Chaucer, and while it was a sort of parable, teaching that good, in the end, must always conquer evil, it was also an expression of the noble dreams called up by the wonderful and stirring experiences of the time. Queen Elizabeth and the country welcomed Spenser's noble poem, with its praise of herself, and of all that was "pure and lovely and of good report." In the early part of his life, Spenser was somewhat neglected, except by his great friend Philip Sidney, and spent most of his life as an English settler in Ireland. But the real Irish people, and some of the English who had long been living in Ireland, were bitterly discontented with the harsh rule of their English masters, and rose in revolt at the end of the century; and Spenser was one of the victims of former misrule, for his beautiful Irish home was destroyed by fire, in which his youngest child perished, and he had to escape to England, where he died a few weeks later—probably of a broken heart.

Spenser's great friend, Sir Philip Sidney, was a noble knight, and one of the foremost figures of the time, beloved by every one for his generous and affectionate nature, as well as esteemed for his genius and learning. He wrote a beautiful prose poem called *Arcadia*, and his brave unselfish character was shown by the gallant sacrifice of his life to save the English army in Flanders,

and the famous story of his refusing the cup of water brought to him when dying on the battlefield. Noticing that a poor dying soldier on the ground near him was looking eagerly at the cup, he at once sent it to him, saying—"Thy necessity is greater than mine"!

But the greatest of all the writers of Elizabeth's reign, as well as the greatest of all English poets, was William Shakespeare, whose dramas (or plays) seem to bring the England of his time very near us. He came just after two famous play writers, named Green and Marlowe, but he is much greater than these, or any who came after him, not only for the great thoughts he has expressed, but because he seems to set before us the real people about whom he writes. Some of his plays seem like a bookshelf of English history; for he tells us about seven English kings, besides a Scottish one, and two old British ones; and though his poems do not always give us the correct facts, they enable us to see the sort of men the kings were, and the sort of life they lived, better than most histories do. He wrote about people of other countries also, and turned their old stories into plays in a way that was wonderful, because he never travelled abroad, and was not at all a learned man.

He is said to have been born on St. George's Day, 1564, in the old town of Stratford-on-Avon, surrounded by rich meadows and beautiful woods; and the ancient wooden house in which he lived, as well as the pretty cottage and garden where he courted his wife, Anne Hathaway, are carefully kept for visitors to see, because Shakespeare is famous all the world over. He knew all the great men of his day, and Queen Elizabeth took much pleasure in his plays and is said

to have asked him to write one of them to please her. He lived for a great many years in London, where he sometime helped in the acting of his own plays, which were performed in a very rough and plain way. The English people of that time were very fond of plays and shows, and when the Queen used to visit her nobles at their castles, there were all sorts of grand performances prepared to entertain her.

Shakespeare spent his last years very quietly in his native town, where he wrote some of his last and finest plays and poems. He died on St. George's Day, 1616, a few years after Queen Elizabeth and some of his best friends. His grave in the chancel of the little church of Stratford is marked by a flat stone, on which is engraved his name and the following curious lines :—

“ Good friend, for Jesus' sake forbear
To digg the dust enclosed heare ;
Bleste be the man that spares these stones,
And curst be he that moves my bones ! ”

There were many other writers of this time, both in prose and poetry, but it would take too long to tell of them, though the greatest of these should not be left out—the learned and wise Lord Bacon, who has been called the “ Prince of Philosophers.” It seems strange that the Queen should never have made him one of her Council ; yet perhaps she thought him too great a philosopher to trouble him with politics. But under her successor, King James, he became Lord Chancellor, and wrote many learned books, though he did not always act as wisely as he wrote.

Queen Elizabeth's captains and seamen became as famous as her great writers. For the English Navy,

which was begun by King Alfred, and gained its first victory over France under Edward III, now became the great hope and defence of England. Philip of Spain became more and more cruel, and more and more the enemy of England, which prevented him from doing all the wicked things he wished to do in Flanders and Holland, in order to force the Protestants there to submit to him and the Pope. As the French were also at war with Philip, and the English liked to have a hand in the fight, there were many little ships whose sailors were called "sea-dogs" which used to fly about the Channel and attack every Spanish ship that they could master. Tennyson's ballad of the *Revenge* tells of one such sea-fight and the spirit of the "sea-dogs" is well shown in the lines :

" We have fought such a fight for a day and a night
As may never be fought again,
We have won great glory, my men,
And a day or two more
At sea—or shore,
We die—does it matter *when* ? "

When the Queen tried to drive the "sea-dogs" from infesting the Channel, they went on towards the new world of America which the Spaniards wanted to keep to themselves, and there they would attack and plunder any ship they could catch. Sometimes the English ships were taken, and then the sailors were cruelly treated by the Spaniards, which made the English hate that nation more. Many young Englishmen loved to go on such adventures as Kingsley has described in his story—*Amyas Leigh* ; while others went to France to fight under King Henry of Navarre, then the Protestant King of France. One brave west-



SIR FRANCIS DRAKE.

country man named Martin Frobisher sailed to explore icy Labrador, and Sir Humphrey Gilbert, half-brother to Sir Walter Raleigh, tried to plant a settlement in the strange new country, but was lost at sea.

But the most famous of these daring sea-captains was Francis Drake—made *Sir* Francis in honour of his courage and his discoveries. He was really a sort of pirate; he did not ask any one's leave, but went abroad and plundered Spanish colonies and treasure-ships, till his name was a terror to all the Spanish seamen on the high seas. Then he thought he would sail on to the Pacific Ocean, where no English flag had been seen before; and, with eighty men in one small ship, called the *Golden Hynde*, he rounded South America, plundering the coast of Chili and Peru and a great ship that sailed yearly, full of treasure, from Lima to Cadiz. A modern English poet represents him as saying:

“If we go, as we came, by the southward, we meet wi' the
fleets of Spain,

'Tis a thousand to one against us, we'll turn to the West
again!

We have captured a China pilot, his charts and his golden
keys,

We'll sail to the Golden Gateway, over the golden seas!”

Thence he steered straight for Africa, seeing many wonderful plants and flowers and beautiful birds on his way, rounded the Cape of Good Hope, and then sailed northward over the Atlantic Ocean and dropped anchor quietly in Plymouth Harbour after his voyage round the world. There is, just above that beautiful harbour, a fine terrace of stone called the “Hoe,” following the curve of the bay, and on it stands a noble

statue of this brave, reckless seaman, looking out to the wide blue sea, and reminding all who see it of his gallant deeds, and this first voyage round the globe.

Though Drake's plunder of Spanish dominions and ships in this time of peace was quite lawless and wrong, the English people and the Queen herself were delighted with his exploits. Philip angrily demanded the surrender of the pirate, but Elizabeth knighted him, and wore in her crown the jewels he had brought her. When the Spanish Ambassador hinted that "matters might come to the cannon," she told him that such threats might bring *him* to a dungeon! She did not, indeed, think that, just then, with so much war on his hands, he could afford to make war on her, and Drake was allowed to make another piratical voyage to plunder the Spanish main. But she was mistaken. Philip had many motives for attacking England. He hated Elizabeth and the Protestants, because they had stood in the way of his great plans for restoring the Pope's power; and now that Mary, Queen of Scots, was dead and had bequeathed her rights to him by her will, he thought that many in England would like to put him on the throne. And the exploits of Drake made him feel that unless England were conquered, there could be no security for his dominions in the New World. Besides, he had lately conquered Portugal, and now felt himself stronger than ever. So he determined to invade England, and began to build vessels of enormous size, to add to the great fleet which he had already been for three years collecting in the Portuguese river Tagus, to take an immense army to England.

But England rose as one man to meet the invader. A great army of volunteers was soon mustered at

Tilbury. Queen Elizabeth, on a white charger, reviewed the troops there, and made them a speech which stirred their courage to the utmost. But the Queen and her people felt that the invader must never be permitted to land on the English shore, and they had at once taken means to prevent this. Sir Francis Drake, with thirty small barks, had sailed to Spain, destroyed all the store-ships he could find in the Spanish ports, and was only prevented by his orders from attacking the "Armada" itself, as the Spanish fleet was called. All this delayed its starting for a year. But at last, in July 1583, the beacon fires all along the coast told the English people that the sails of the great Armada were in sight. A grand spectacle it must have been; for there were a hundred and forty-nine ships, sixty-five of them great galleons, while the English fleet counted but eighty vessels (including volunteer merchantmen from London), about fifty of which were no bigger than many yachts of to-day. The Spanish fleet carried eight thousand seamen, and two thousand five hundred cannon, with an army of twenty thousand soldiers, and the best officers Spain possessed.

But England was ready, and there were neither faint hearts nor traitors to betray it to the Spaniards. It has often been told how the swift little English ships chased the great galleons, sailing two feet and firing four shots to their one, and how Lord Howard sent fire-ships among them at the turn of the tide as they lay anchored near Calais. The great ships hastily cut their cables, and in a panic steered out to sea. Drake resolved to keep them there, and closing his ships round them at dawn, he fought all day, till the English

seamen had hardly any powder left when the sun went down. But some of the great galleons were sunk, and some had drifted on the French coast, and though those that were left seemed to Drake "wonderful great and strong," the terrible slaughter and destruction had taken the heart out of the Spanish seamen, and their commanders steered homeward round the Orkneys. Drake would have chased them, but for lack of powder and shot. But of this there was no need, for a great northern storm arose and wrecked numbers of the vessels on the coasts of Scotland and Ireland. Eight thousand Spaniards perished off the north point of Ireland, by disease, shipwreck or slaughter, and eleven hundred dead were cast up on the shore near Sligo. Only fifty ships arrived at Corunna, with ten thousand men, most of them struck down by disease and death. It was a great deliverance for England, but for Spain it was a crushing calamity.

One of the last great events of Elizabeth's reign happened just at its close, when Ireland, which had long been as unsettled as Scotland was in its earlier days, was at last forced to submit to the English rule. There had been many unhappy revolts, often against very unjust treatment by the English settlers, who were hated by the Celts. The last of these was helped on by the Queen's young favourite, the Earl of Essex, who was put to death for his treachery. The Queen wished to pardon him—but did not—and his death saddened her last days, which were clouded by a strange melancholy, and under it the great but lonely Queen passed away. She died in 1603, at Richmond Palace, and her body was brought by the Thames to be laid in Westminster Abbey—her statue (or effigy) lying on

the coffin. The national mourning is thus pictured by a poet of her time:—

“The Queen did come by water to Whitehall,
The oars at every stroke did tears let fall.”

The sorrow of her subjects was said at the time to be greater than “any seen or known in the memory of man.”

CHAPTER XXXII

SIR WALTER RALEIGH AND THE MEN OF THE *MAYFLOWER*

1603-30

THOUGH Sir Walter Raleigh was one of the heroes of Queen Elizabeth, and so belongs partly to her reign, the sad close of his history belongs to that of James I of England and VI of Scotland. And as Raleigh and the Men of the *Mayflower* were among the first to found British colonies in America, their stories may well be joined together.

It seemed a misfortune for England that the wise Queen Elizabeth should not have had a fitter successor than James of Scotland, the son of her cousin Mary Queen of Scots. He had been crowned King of Scotland when the crown was taken from his mother, and as he was the next heir to the English throne, he succeeded Queen Elizabeth as James I of England, and was therefore the first real King of Great Britain, as he wished the island to be now called. And as Ireland was thenceforth looked upon as conquered, he may be called the first King of the British Empire. It was about this time that the Scottish Cross of St. Andrew was placed on the British flag, beside that of St. George, as we now see them on our Union Jack.

King James was not strong and brave, like his forefathers, but was weak, foolish, cowardly and superstitious, as well as self-willed and conceited. He had been much spoiled as a child, by the flattery of bad friends and silly people about him, though he had a wise and learned tutor named George Buchanan, who made him a good scholar, but could not make him a wise man. Though his mother had been so beautiful, and his father a tall and handsome prince, James was very plain and awkward-looking, and his manner and speech scarcely more agreeable. Yet he was by no means stupid, and had some of the humour and shrewdness of his race. But he came to England filled with ideas of his own greatness, and determined to rule just as he pleased over a people that Elizabeth had governed according to their ancient laws. And out of this arose much trouble.

When King James was a little child of five years old, kept at Stirling Castle for safety, some of the Scottish nobles met one day for what they called a Parliament, though it was not much like the English one. They sat round a long table at the head of which the little King was placed. As he could not understand what the other people were talking about, he amused himself by finding out a hole in the table cover. Putting his finger into it, he said—"There is a hole in this Parliament." Soon after this his grandfather, the Earl of Lennox, was murdered, and these childish words were thought to have foreshadowed trouble. Certainly it afterwards appeared to be the purpose of his reign to make such holes in the English Parliament, that very little of its powers should be left.

For it was during the reigns of this King James, his

son and his two grandsons—the four Stuart kings of England—that the people of Britain, as a whole, passed through their hardest struggles to keep the rights and the freedom they had so long fought for, from being torn away from them altogether. And—as we shall see—it was not merely their civil rights as freemen, but also the most sacred right of every man to follow his conscience as to his religious belief and duty, which these kings tried to crush down with more or less cruelty—especially in Scotland, where their fathers had reigned so long.

Soon after the death of Queen Elizabeth, King James, attended by a number of the Scottish nobles, went to London to be crowned in Westminster Abbey. The English nobles did not take very kindly to these Scots, who were not nearly so rich as themselves, and, having been used to so much rough fighting, had not such pleasant manners, though they were often much better scholars. The Scottish people were naturally proud of having never been conquered by England, and of having given it a Scottish King in the end. But they soon found reason to feel that the change had not been for their good, in the things they cared for most.

Some time before King James came to reign in England, he had written a book in which he maintained that a king was not bound to abide by the law any farther than he chose. And now that he had come to England he was determined to be its master in a way in which very few of the English kings had ever tried to be. He soon told his Council in London that it was “great presumption in a subject to dispute what a king may do, or to say that he cannot do this or that.” This, of course, was quite contrary to the rights and

liberties which the English people prized so greatly, and it began to seem as if the work of securing them would have to be done over again. For a king with such power could do to his subjects any wrong he liked. And James soon showed that he was set on ruling the Church as tyrannically as the State.

Three-fourths of the people of England were now called "Protestants," because they protested against beliefs and practices in the old manner of worship which they thought wrong. Many of them were called Puritans, because they earnestly studied the Holy Scriptures, and tried to live purely according to its teaching. For since the English Bible had been given to the people, it had been read everywhere. There were not many English books then, and therefore the Bible was all the more studied, and called—as its name means—*The Book*, the best book in the world. John Milton, the author of *Paradise Lost*, England's greatest poet after Shakespeare, was a Puritan, and got much of the spirit of his poetry from the Bible. He was born a few years before the death of Shakespeare, and was a great scholar as well as a great poet, and a good and noble-minded man, loving freedom and true religion with all his heart. Many of the country squires and gentlemen were Puritans, and had learned to care much for the good of their poor neighbours, in the spirit of Christ and the Golden Rule. Of one of these, the brave Colonel Hutchinson, we are told that he "never disdained the meanest nor flattered the greatest," and "had a loving and sweet courtesy for the poorest, and would employ many spare hours with the commonest soldiers and poorest labourers." These Puritans were staunch Protestants, and as some things that

they did not believe in were still allowed in the service of the Church of England, many clergymen and others begged the King to have these done away with, so that all might worship together in peace. But the King and Archbishop would not hear of this, and three hundred ministers had to leave their parishes rather than agree to what they did not believe right.

King James had been brought up in Scotland, where the people had agreed to have a Church without bishops like other Protestant Churches in Europe, and were called Presbyterians. But when he came to England and found that he was considered the Head of the Church there, he wished the Church of Scotland to have bishops also, and used sometimes to say, "No Bishop—no King:" therefore he not only insisted that all the Puritans should be subject to bishops but he also tried to treat the Scottish Church in the same way. The good and learned minister, Andrew Melville, was sent to London to speak to the King. But James and his English bishops did not wish to hear him, and he was sent to the Tower and kept a prisoner there for four years. And many cruel and oppressive things of the same kind were done in both England and Scotland—and Ireland too, where the Roman Catholics were ill-treated, as well as the Presbyterians in Scotland.

As time went on, many disputes arose between the King and his Parliament, both concerning Church matters and the raising of taxes without its consent, contrary to the old laws of England. At one time he sent four of its members to the Tower for opposing his tyranny. He was always in need of money, for he and

his Queen, Anne of Denmark, were both fond of costly amusements, and James liked to spend large sums of money on unworthy Court favourites, with little but good looks to their credit. At first he received good advice from Queen Elizabeth's trusty Councillor, Robert Cecil, son of the old Lord Burleigh, who was made Earl of Salisbury for his services. But after his death, the King could hardly be said to have any Council at all, taking advice from one worthless favourite after another. The most notable of these was a handsome but reckless young man named George Villiers, who soon became Duke of Buckingham. Like Wolsey, he seemed able to do as he pleased with the King and his proudest nobles, and spent on pomp and show for himself a large part of the taxes forced from the people in all sorts of ways. The poor had often to pay more for the necessities of life, that he might appear glittering with gold and jewels at a time when Englishmen were content with more sober attire. When the King was asked by his Parliament to do away with some of these oppressive exactions, he became very angry and tried, for a time, to reign without calling any Parliament at all.

After the death of the King's eldest son Prince Henry, Buckingham tried to promote his plan of marrying his son Charles to the daughter of the King of Spain, a scheme much dreaded and disliked by the English people, who were anxious that he should marry a Protestant princess. But King James cared little about *that*, for he would not even help the Protestant princes of Germany who were fighting for its religious freedom, and trying, for this reason, to place his own son-in-law on the throne of Bohemia. And

when he was obliged to call a Parliament, he did not wish it to discuss the making of laws and the business of the nation. But the members manfully decided that these things were *their* business as well as *his*, and that they must be free to attend to them. At this, King James was so angry that he sent for the records of the House of Commons, and tore out the pages containing this declaration, which was very rude, but did not make much difference in the end.

Then Parliament passed what was called an "Act of Uniformity," which meant that the majority of the Parliament agreed with the King to have only one form of religion allowed in the kingdom, and as the Protestants were very much afraid lest the Pope should ever again have power in England, some of the severe laws against Roman Catholics were again put in force. This led to much discontent and trouble, as all laws of this kind do; and a few violent and revengeful men agreed in contriving one of the most wicked and desperate schemes in our history—the notorious "Gunpowder Plot."

This wicked plot was meant to destroy the King and all his Parliament at once, by blowing up the building in which it met, on the day when the King came to open it—the fifth of November. The idea came from a gentleman named Robert Catesby, who had already been concerned in another rising, on account of which the brave Sir Walter Raleigh was now in prison. Along with some others, Catesby hired a house close to Westminster, and managed to secure a cellar just underneath the House of Lords, where they secretly stored thirty-six barrels of gunpowder. A daring man named Guy Fawkes undertook to fire the powder at

the right moment, and then make his own escape in a ship that lay ready in the Thames.

The plotters very nearly succeeded, and would have quite done so, but for the desire one of them had to save the life of his relative, Lord Mounteagle, who was sure to be in the House of Lords on the appointed day. In order to prevent this, he sent a mysterious warning to his friend, which at once gave the alarm. A search was made—the powder was discovered, and Guy Fawkes himself was caught, just as he was preparing to light the fuse. All the other plotters fled, but were hunted till they were found and put to death, and the Fifth of November has ever since been "remembered" in England. For many years there used to be what were called "Guy Fawkes" processions on that night, in memory of the country's deliverance from the "Gunpowder Plot."

It was while the King was still planning for the marriage of Prince Charles with the Spanish princess that Sir Walter Raleigh's story came to a sad end. As the nation hated this Spanish marriage, some of the King's counsellors persuaded him to employ Sir Walter on an errand which, they hoped, might draw England into a war with Spain. Sir Walter had not only been one of Queen Elizabeth's heroes, but one of her greatest favourites also; yet he was now in prison for the second time in his life. He was a great man in several ways; for he was a famous soldier, having fought gallantly in several countries, and also a great sailor and explorer, having been one of the first to make journeys of discovery in the "New World," as America was then called. During the years he was shut up in prison, he wrote for young Prince Henry a

book called *The History of the World*, in which he described much that he had seen in his various voyages.

It is said that he first won the favour of Queen Elizabeth by throwing his cloak over a muddy spot she was about to cross. Whether this is true or not, it is no wonder that he was a favourite with her, for he was handsome, clever, gallant and brave. The Queen gave him a large property in Ireland, and this enabled him to make his voyages to America. He sailed southward and settled the first colony of English people in what is now one of the United States, which was named Virginia, in honour of Elizabeth, the "Maiden Queen." But the people who went there thought that they were going to make their fortunes quickly and easily by finding gold, and did not care for tilling the soil, or facing wild savages. So, though Raleigh more than once sent ships and men, and spent his own fortune on the colony, it never had any success. But his travels there have always been gratefully remembered ; for he brought home that useful vegetable, the potato, to be planted for the first time in Britain. He also noticed that the Indians used to roll up and dry a certain large and long leaf, and smoke it after it was dry. He tried it himself and liked it so much that he brought some to England, which made the beginning of the use of tobacco. Whether this is to be called a benefit to men, each must judge for himself ; but it is not one to *boys*, for its use is very injurious to their health and strength.

When the great Spanish Armada threatened England, Sir Walter said it must be driven off by sea, before any landing could be made ; and we know how well that plan succeeded. Yet notwithstanding his



SIR WALTER RALEIGH.

gallant deeds, Queen Elizabeth was so much offended with him for marrying one of her ladies without her permission, that she sent him to prison for several months. After his release, he made his great voyage to South America, where he explored the mighty river Orinoco. After that, in 1597, he went with Lords Howard and Essex, and commanded an expedition to attack Cadiz, and though it was defended by a fleet of about eighty ships, the sailors were seized with panic when Raleigh suddenly appeared with his little fleet, and fled to the shore in their boats, leaving the English to storm and take the town. The victors treated the vanquished with much humanity, but broke up the Spanish fleet, so that a second Armada was made impossible.

Soon after King James had begun to reign, Sir Walter was accused by his enemies of being concerned, with Catesby and others, in a plot to dethrone the King, and was again sent to the Tower, under sentence of death, which the King was then afraid to carry out, because Raleigh was greatly beloved by the people. There he remained shut up for several years, spending much of his time in writing his *History of England* for Prince Henry, who liked and admired him very much and used to say that "no one but his father would keep such a bird in such a cage."

At last he was released, in order that he might sail again to South America, to find a wonderful gold mine of which he had heard during his former voyage, when he was searching for a Golden City, about which many fables were told. As the King was always in need of money, he gave Raleigh fourteen vessels for his expedition. But Sir Walter could find no gold

mine. Then—as he did not wish to return empty-handed, and as the Spanish troops on the sea-coast prevented him from searching for it, he committed a wrong and disobeyed the King, by permitting his men to go some distance into the country and there plunder a Spanish town, as Drake used to do. But in the fight with the Spaniards his men were defeated, his own son was killed, and Raleigh was obliged to return sorrowful and unsuccessful, after all! Then, as James particularly wished to remain friendly with the King of Spain, whom Raleigh had thus offended, he had no mercy on Elizabeth's old hero, who was soon beheaded in the Tower. In his old age and sorrow, he did not seem to care to live longer, for he kissed the axe, and said, "'Tis a sharp medicine, but a sure cure for all diseases."

Some ten years before the expedition of Sir Walter Raleigh, another one had set out in the opposite direction, led by a man who was to make even greater discoveries than Sir Walter. This was a man from the town of Ipswich, close to London, named Henry Hudson, who sailed down the Thames on the first of May, 1607, hoping to discover the North Pole. That was the first "Polar Expedition" of which we know anything, and this brave mariner sailed away north over the grey tossing seas, amidst wild storms and glittering icebergs, till he did come almost as near to the Pole as any one has done since. But though he did not find the Pole, he afterwards undertook another voyage for the Dutch, during which he discovered the beautiful Hudson river, and the great inland sea of Hudson's Bay, both of which have, ever since, been called by his name. The Dutch changed his name to Hendrik

Hudson, by which he is most often called. And his brave life, too, had a very sad ending, through a mutiny of his men, who cast him adrift in an open boat to perish miserably at sea.

The fertile country of Virginia, of which Raleigh had taken possession for England, was not likely to be forgotten by Englishmen, especially when the tyrannical reign of King James made many of them ready to leave their own land and go to make new homes beyond sea. The next set of emigrants who went to settle there were not afraid of hard work, though forty-eight of them were country gentlemen, led by one named John Smith, and only twelve had ever been used to tilling the soil. But they all "fell to building houses and planting corn," and in time more followed them. At the end of fifteen years, this first British "colony" (as it was called), numbered about five thousand people.

These people began their settlement on the same plan of free government for which they had long fought at home. A few years later, Lord Baltimore, who had become a Roman Catholic, was forced, like the Puritans, to find a refuge for himself and others who held the same belief. He made a settlement near the first colony, and called it Maryland, after the French wife of King Charles, Henrietta Maria. And this colony was established on a plan which no one in England seemed to have yet thought of, as a way out of the troubles caused by differences about religion. For in the first laws he made, it was declared that no one in that settlement should be in any way disturbed in the free practice of his religion. If the King and the English people could only have then agreed on this wise

course, it would have saved much misery during many years to come.

Even in the reign of Elizabeth all the people had not been allowed this liberty, and some had even been put to death for their belief : and the second settlement made in America, before that of Lord Baltimore, was made for that reason. A number of people called "Brownists" had taken refuge in Holland, about twenty-five years before, because the Parliament of that time would not let them worship differently from others, as they thought right ; and with their minister, John Robinson, they first settled in Holland. But, hearing of the success of the people in Virginia, they thought that they might make for themselves a happy home in America. So they set out—forty-one families,—men, women and children, in two small ships. One of these soon turned back—perhaps unfit for the perils of the stormy sea, but the other held stoutly on its way. This was the little *Mayflower*, made famous by having brought the "Pilgrim Fathers" of the United States to Plymouth Rock. It brought their wives and children also, and it must have been an anxious little company that first pitched their tents on the "rock-bound coast" on which they landed. But—as they themselves said—they were not men whom small things could discourage, and they had a noble aim, which the English poet, Mrs. Hemans, has put into noble verse.

"What sought they thus, afar ?

Bright jewels of the mine ?

The wealth of seas, the pomp of war ?—

They sought a faith's pure shrine !"

And having "found what there they sought, freedom

to worship God," according to their conscience, they were happy and content to toil and suffer, to live hardly and simply—"sometimes not knowing at night where to have a bit in the morning." Once they had reached the end of their supplies, and were anxiously watching for the ship that should bring them food. Starvation was threatening them, for it was dreary November, and the cold winter was about to close in. Just when the need was greatest, the long-looked-for ship appeared, and the joy of the people was mingled with gratitude for the deliverance. A Thanksgiving Service was at once held, with truly grateful hearts, and the anniversary of that day has, ever since, been kept as a holiday, as the "Thanksgiving Day" of the young nation these brave men founded there.

This little colony of "New Plymouth"—taking its name from the old Plymouth, which was the last English port at which the *Mayflower* touched, was much talked of in the Puritan homes of England, and many good and patriotic Englishmen began to think of removing to a land of promise where they, too, should find escape from the religious tyranny which harassed them at home. Within ten years later, a new English colony was founded, not very far from New Plymouth, and its capital town took its name from the old Boston in Lincolnshire, whose merchants helped in its foundation. The famous John Winthrop, with a thousand staunch comrades, arrived there early in the reign of King Charles and were soon followed by many of the best men of their neighbourhood, doctors, lawyers, ministers, country gentlemen and good Puritan farmers. They had many a hardship to face, cold, hunger, famine, wild beasts and fiercer

savages: but they were brave and stedfast—true to their conscience and their faith. And though even *they* did not always see the duty of giving to others the same freedom they had gained at such a price, we must never forget that it was their noble mission to lay the foundations of a “New England,” and—in time—of a “Greater Britain” beyond the Western seas.

CHAPTER XXXIII

CHARLES I AND THE MARQUIS OF MONTROSE

1625-1649

WHEN James I died, in 1625, the people of both England and Scotland soon found out how well his son Charles had learned the lessons his father had taught him. For he was even more determined than his father had been to maintain what he called "the Divine Right of Kings" to do with his subjects what he pleased. When he came back from Spain, without the Spanish bride the people had dreaded, bonfires were lighted to show their joy that the hated match was given up. Charles was much more comely and kingly in his appearance than his father had been, as well as much more clever and agreeable; and the people also hoped that he would turn out a better king. Like the old Stuarts he was fond of poetry and music and pictures and clever men. But some who watched him closely prayed that he might be set in the right way, for "if he was in the wrong, he would prove the most wilful of any king that ever reigned." He proved one of the most deceitful also; and these two faults brought him into long and deadly strife with the best of his people.

Though the English rejoiced that they were not to have a Spanish Queen, they did not much like the King's marriage with the sister of the King of France. Queen Henrietta Maria was a Roman Catholic, and her influence did much to widen the breach between him and his Protestant subjects. The nation was, for the time, pleased that war was declared with Spain; but when the English arms were defeated, and the country felt the weight of a heavy debt, the Duke of Buckingham was greatly disliked both for his bad management and his extravagance. When he was blamed for these things in Parliament, by a brave gentleman named Sir John Eliot, the King declared that he would not allow the acts of any of his servants to be questioned. This was quite contrary to the rights of the Parliament, but it was only what King Charles seemed to have determined from the first.

The Stuarts, as we have seen, had always been very masterful in Scotland, where there had hardly been any real government by Parliament. And Charles fully believed that a King who inherits the crown, as he did, from his father, instead of being chosen by the people, as the English kings used to be, might rule as he pleased, and was not bound to keep the laws, or even his own promises. This was the root of the troubles of his reign, but the bad advice of his friends helped to make things worse.

Buckingham was the first of these, and the King's first quarrel with the Parliament was on his account. Charles was so angry with two members of the House of Commons, Sir John Eliot and Sir Dudley Digges, because they found fault with Buckingham, that he came himself to the House of Commons, and sent

them to the Tower. When Parliament refused to go on with business till these members were released, the King dismissed it, and also deprived Eliot of the office of Vice-Admiral. And as the Parliament had not granted the money which the King badly wanted, he tried to make the people pay it to him. But their cry was "A Parliament, or no money!" Then he tried to compel them to "lend" it to him, as he called it, and the poor men who could not do this were forced to serve in the army or navy.

It was then that a noble-minded young squire, whose statue now stands close to the entrance to the House of Commons, made a brave stand for the freedom of England. There were eight peers, also, who refused to comply with the King's unjust demands, and he did not dare to meddle with *them*; but he sent two hundred country gentlemen to prison for the same cause, and Hampden, especially, suffered such close captivity that he never again looked the same man as before.

John Hampden was one of three heroes of that time who stood up for the old liberties of the people, and all bore the name of John—John Eliot, John Hampden, and John Pym, of whom we shall hear more soon. And the King had also three men who gave him bad advice, Buckingham, Strafford and Bishop Laud. But the time of the first was nearly over.

The King was obliged, at last, by need of money, to call the Parliament together again, but he found the new one even more firm than the last, in defence of the liberties of England. A paper was drawn up, called a "Petition of Right," insisting on the rights declared in the Great Charter, which the King was transgressing. He at last gave his consent, in words,

to what the "Petition" asked, but, in his own mind, he was determined to use what he called his "Sovereign Power," contrary to the law, and to put men in prison and keep them there, without saying why. He was determined, also, to tax the people as he pleased, in order to give Buckingham all he desired. But an unexpected avenger of the people appeared in a retired officer named John Felton, who regarded the proud favourite as a curse to the country, and seized an opportunity to stab him to the heart. The King was overwhelmed with grief, and the assassin, who at once gave himself up, was justly put to death, but the people rejoiced at the deed, and the sailors of the war-ships shouted their entreaties to "spare John Felton!"

But Charles learned nothing by this experience, for he next began, by the advice of Bishop Laud, to interfere with the religion of the people. Though he seemed as grave and serious as the Puritans, he did not like them, because they preferred to worship in a different way from himself, and were, as we know, very strict about truth and justice. Bishop Laud wished every one to worship according to the Service of the Established Church, into which he insisted on putting back some things that had been left out of it when England became Protestant; and he also wished to prevent the clergy from being married, as they had now been long permitted to do. Sir John Eliot and others spoke in Parliament against such changes; and when the angry King sent to dismiss the Parliament, the doors were locked against his messengers till Sir John had finished his speech, and all the members had shouted "Aye! Aye!" But the

brave Sir John was speedily sent to the Tower, where he died, years after, from the effects of long confinement—the first martyr to the people's cause.

For eleven years after this, King Charles did not once call a Parliament together, but by means of great economy, and making people pay for the sole right to sell things that everybody had to buy, he managed to do without the people's taxes. But this state of things could not last long, and the King had now a new adviser, much stronger and cleverer than Buckingham, who was determined to give him all the power he wanted. This man, Sir Thomas Wentworth, had been one of the foremost in urging the "Petition of Right." But this was partly because he had a quarrel with Buckingham; for as soon as *he* was dead, Wentworth turned quite round, and managed to get into favour with the King, by declaring that he would set him free from all restraint on the part of his subjects, and was soon made Earl of Strafford. He was a rough, proud, passionate man, and—like Sir Thomas Cromwell—cared little what any one thought of him, so long as he could keep all the power in the King's hands and his own.

Ireland, which had been in many ways ill-treated and badly governed, was still in a very unsettled state. Strafford was sent there as the King's deputy, and though his rule was harsh, he put down violence and crime, and cleared the coasts of pirates. He also started the great linen trade of Ireland, and raised an army of the native Irish; but he did not even try to make them friends with the English settlers—a thing that was the most important of all.

Just at this time, the King and the Archbishop Laud

were planning a new act of oppression, which was, in the end, to bring about the ruin of both. As we have seen, many good people had already been driven away from England, because the King insisted that all must worship alike, so that hundreds of brave gentlemen had, by this time, left their English homes to make new ones in America, where they could worship as they thought right. And now Charles, urged on by Laud, insisted on oppressing, in the same way, the people of Scotland, who loved their own Established Church, which was "Presbyterian" (that is, without bishops), though, in order to please King James, they had allowed his bishops to preside at their Synods.

But now Laud, as English Primate, ordered that their Church should be made just like the Church of England, and to this the people, who had fought bravely for their ancient rights, would not submit. The first attempt to force them to do so ended in a riot. The kingdom was up in arms at once, and the effect of this was soon felt in England, where the King was trying to force on the people a tax they thought very unjust. This was called "ship-money," because it was supposed to be paid in place of the ships which used sometimes to be given by towns on the coast, for the country's defence. John Hampden was foremost in refusing to pay a tax which he held to be unlawful, but a majority of the judges declared that it must be paid. And this new trouble sent many more Englishmen across the sea to found a colony which soon became known as Massachusetts.

It was just then that the gallant young Earl of Montrose began to take part in the affairs of his native Scotland. He had just returned from travels in Europe,

and—besides being handsome and gifted—was a fine scholar, a poet, and a skilful leader in war. He was strongly attached to the royal Stuart race of his country, but he was also ready to stand up for the rights of his nation. As he passed through London, he sought an opportunity of being presented to the King but was disappointed by the cold manner of Charles, to whose service, nevertheless, he was destined to devote his life.

When he arrived in Scotland, he found it in a storm of indignation. Nobles and people of all ranks were flocking to Greyfriars Church, Edinburgh, to sign the old "Covenant" they had made—years before—to defend their religion, and resist all "contrary errors." Many did this with tears on their cheeks, and some are said to have signed it with their blood. An old grey tablet in the churchyard still keeps the record of many of their names. Young Montrose was soon pressed into the service, and rode far and wide through the country, getting long parchment rolls filled with the names of signers of the "Covenant."

Large portions of Scotland were then still unsettled, and the beautiful mountainous country of the Highlanders was mainly ruled by their chiefs, who led their people where they pleased. As the nation was much divided, some of these chiefs were now fighting in Scotland for the King, and in the following spring Montrose led an expedition to the North, to check their ravages. He succeeded in getting a treaty arranged with Huntly, the King's lieutenant, but in spite of this, and of all that Montrose could do, Huntly was afterwards imprisoned as a hostage, when attending a peaceable meeting. Montrose was angry at this

breach of faith, but, shortly after, he led a large body of Lowland troops to meet the still fighting chiefs, and—crossing the river Dee—drove them back, and so saved the little city of Aberdeen from ravage and ruin.

As the Scottish Parliament now began to take sides against the King, Charles thought it best to make a hasty truce with the leaders, and for this purpose he met Montrose three miles from Berwick, on the Border. This time he was much more gracious to the young General, who on his side was much taken with the King. From that time a change came over Montrose, as his attachment to Charles grew stronger than his trust in the Scottish leaders. He still, however, fought on for Scotland, trying to keep down angry feeling on both sides. At the end of the short truce, when fighting again began, he was still at the head of a division under the Scottish General Leslie, who crossed the Tweed and gained a victory over the royal forces.

And now King Charles, after eleven years without a Parliament, was compelled to call one, in order to raise the money he wanted for subduing the Scots. They, in their need, had begged aid from France, and Charles thought that the Parliament would be so angry at this, that they would vote large supplies at once. But the English Puritans knew, by this time, that the Scots were really helping to fight the battle of British liberty; just as their forefathers, in fighting against Edward I, had helped the English to secure their first real Parliament. They declared that they would do nothing till the King had righted the wrongs of his subjects. He would not do what they asked, and, in three weeks, dismissed this Parliament, which has ever since been called the "Short Parliament."

The next was to last longer. Strafford hurried back from Ireland to lead the royal army against the Scots, who again crossed the border, and forced a passage across the Tyne into the great coal country. Then, making common cause with their English fellow-subjects, they asked the King, with the consent of his Parliament, to consider *their* grievances, also, and make a true peace. At that time Charles was at York, almost in despair, for he knew that the Scottish army was ready to march on the city, and that the untrained Irish troops were of little use, while London was almost in arms against him. He tried calling a Council of the nobles at York, but even this failed him, and he was forced to summon Parliament. This one, which is called the "Long Parliament," and sat for seven years, was one of the most eventful and important in English history. None who were present at its opening could have foreseen the events that were to happen before its close.

Meantime, things had not been going well with Montrose. Thinking that the Earl of Argyle was growing too powerful, he joined a league against him, which made him a bitter enemy. Then, seeing that King Charles was in serious trouble, and thinking it unlikely that he would do Scotland any more harm, he wrote a letter to him, expressing his loyal sympathy. This led to a break with the other Scottish leaders, and Montrose, with some of his near relatives, was imprisoned in Edinburgh. Two months later, King Charles himself came to Scotland, agreed to all that the leaders had asked, made their General, Leslie, Earl of Leven, and Argyle a Marquis. But he could do nothing for Montrose, and though he begged for

his release, he did not succeed in getting him and his friends set free until after his departure, and he had first to promise not to see or employ him in any affairs of state. Montrose, disheartened and discouraged, retired to his quiet country home, to watch the course of events, and "bide his time."

In England, though brave Sir John Eliot had died in prison, Hampden was still to the front, and the Long Parliament had a true leader in the great and good John Pym, who was so kingly in appearance and character that he was often called "King Pym." He felt that a very serious question must now be faced, and the first thing done by the Parliament was to send Strafford to the Tower, to be tried for his bad advice to the King. Charles tried to save him by fair promises, but it was soon found out that he was plotting to bring the army to the rescue. That sealed Strafford's fate, in spite of his long and able defence, during which the Londoners surrounded the House, shouting "Justice!" Although Strafford was harsh and cruel, he was a brave man, and met his fate bravely and almost cheerfully, in the face of the multitude that gathered to witness his execution, and returned from the scene, waving their hats and shouting—"His head is off! His head is off!"

It would take too long to tell all that was done in this Parliament, which was very much divided, for most of the rich nobles and squires, who now began to be called "Cavaliers," opposed all changes in Church or State, while many others, especially those called "Puritans," were determined to resist the King's tyrannical acts. The wisest of them tried to find some way of putting things straight, but they soon discov-

ered that no trust could be placed in the King's word or promise, for he did not think himself bound to keep faith with his subjects, which, we can easily see, was very unlike good King Alfred—the "Truth-teller," and the "Shepherd of his people."

After the fall of Strafford, there were great disorders in Ireland, where the Irish people, seizing their chance, rose in arms against the English settlers whom they hated and regarded as oppressors, and cruelly put thousands of them to death. The King hoped that an army might now be raised to subdue Ireland, with which he might master England also. But the Commons would not place such a weapon in his hands. Only a few days after he had promised his best friends there to do nothing without consulting them, and—on the honour of a King—"to defend his Parliament, even as his own children," he entered it himself, with a band of armed men, to seize Pym and Hampden and three other leaders for "Treason," because they had entered into an alliance with the Scots. It was well that these gentlemen had been sent away in time, or there might have been a shameful riot within the House of Commons. The King in vain demanded that they should be given up by the aldermen of London, who protected them. The Palace of Whitehall was speedily surrounded by an angry mob, whose furious cries could be heard by those within. Troops of stout English yeomen rode hard over the muddy country roads to Westminster, with the badge of the Parliament in their hats, and the "trained-bands" (or militia) of London and the watermen on the river, escorted Pym and his comrades back to the House of Commons in triumph. The Cavaliers in attendance

at Whitehall hastily departed, and the King himself left London for Hampton Court, to return to it only as a prisoner of state.

As the south of England was now up in arms for the support of the Parliament, the King sent the Earl of Newcastle to raise a royal force in the North. This was the opportunity of Montrose. If the King should indeed be driven from England, he was determined to hold Scotland for him. He went to see the King at York, and urged him to try to get the loyal Scots to keep the Scottish Parliament from joining with the English one against him, but the King listened to counsels of delay, and Montrose—disappointed and vexed—but still ready for service, again retired, and waited.

What he feared soon happened. The two Parliaments entered into a solemn League and Covenant to stand by each other in defence of their rights and their religious beliefs. And there was no delay about it. The English Parliament quickly raised twenty regiments of foot and seventy-five troops of cavalry, while the people brought their money and plate and jewellery to help to pay them. The Earl of Leven joined this force with twenty thousand Scots, four thousand being enlisted in one day. Then Montrose hastened to the King at Oxford and offered to gather the Highlanders of the north and west of Scotland to follow the standard of their old House of Stuart, and to bring a large force from Ireland to help them to keep Scotland loyal to the King. Charles gladly accepted the offer, and made Montrose a Marquis, as well as his Lieutenant-General, and the new Marquis as gladly began his welcome task.

In the meantime, the Queen had taken her eldest daughter to Holland, to marry the Prince of Orange, from which great good was yet to come to Britain, and she had also taken the crown-jewels to pawn for money wherewith to buy arms and ammunition. And many of the people in that neighbourhood brought their jewels and plate to help the army of the King, as the people of the south did to help that of the Parliament. The King's standard was set up at Nottingham, and he and his dashing German nephew—Prince Rupert—and his Cavaliers seemed at first to have the best of it. The famous English poet Browning has written a "Cavalier Song" to show us the spirit of the Cavaliers, as they dashed on to the fray. Here is a verse of it :—

"England, good cheer! Rupert is near;
Kentish and Loyalists, keep we not here!
Hold by the right—you double your might;
Onward to Nottingham, fresh for the fight!
March we along, fifty score strong,
Great-hearted gentlemen, singing this song!

Both Cavaliers and Puritans fully believed that they were fighting for the good of their country, which made it the more sad that "great-hearted" Englishmen should meet in deadly fight against each other. On the side of the Puritans the brave Hampden fell, on the field of Chalgrove, before the first year was over, much lamented by thousands of Englishmen.

On the side of the Cavaliers, the Marquis of Montrose set out for the Highlands, being joined by some Scottish nobles and their men on the way. He took the town of Dumfries and ravaged the English border, and when the battle of Marston Moor was fought and lost by

the King's army, Montrose was on his way back to bring help. But he only arrived in time to share the danger of pursuit, and had a narrow escape, in the disguise of a groom.

Returning to the Highlands, Montrose took refuge in a solitary hut, waiting for the Irish troops the King had sent for. When they came at last—not nearly so many as he had expected—he at once set up the royal standard near Blair-Athol, in Perthshire, and summoned the simple Highlanders, who flocked thither, knowing nothing except that the King was in danger, and needed their aid. With Argyle and his clansmen in pursuit, the Marquis marched to Perth, where he gained a victory over the Lowland army of six thousand men on the field of Tippermuir. He next occupied Perth, and advanced to Aberdeen, then a small town of four or five hundred small houses, which he had formerly saved from violence; but now he could not restrain his wild Irish soldiers from plundering and killing the poor townspeople without mercy. Nothing did more harm to the King's cause than his bringing these barbarous Irish to fight the Scots, and many of his own English captains left his service when they heard of it.

Montrose was now considered so formidable that a large reward was offered for his head, but he fearlessly kept up his dashing warfare, till he had won six battles. Some of these were in the country of his enemy Argyle, to which he had made a wonderful march, through the wild mountain-passes, in the depth of winter. Argyle, unthinking of danger at that season, was at his home, Inverary Castle, when his shepherds came rushing in from the mountains, to give the alarm.

Argyle, utterly unprepared, made his escape in a fishing-boat, leaving his people to be slain and his country laid waste by the followers of Montrose. However, with the help of one of his kinsmen, a brave soldier, he soon mustered an army of three thousand men, and met Montrose at the old Castle of Inverlochy, where a battle was fought, and Argyle's men of the Clan Campbell were utterly defeated, with "a great slaughter," which Montrose said he would have hindered if he could. Argyle himself, with his arm in a sling, owing to a fall from his horse, watched the battle from a galley on the lake, and got safely away.

When the famous battle of Naseby at last sealed the fate of King Charles, Montrose was still undaunted. He was now master of the Highlands, and a victory at Kilsyth made him, for a time, master of Scotland, a power which he used honourably, restraining his troops from violence or any unjust severity. He was most anxious that Charles should come himself to take possession of Scotland. But the King was still endeavouring to rally his forces in England; and meantime the tide of success turned. At Philiphaugh near the Border, the small army of Montrose was surprised by the Lowland General Leslie, and in spite of the most heroic efforts of the "Great Marquis," it was beaten and scattered. The prisoners met with no mercy, most of them being slain on the spot, while some were kept for public execution. Montrose would fain have rescued his friends, and tried to raise another army for the purpose, but tried in vain.

Then a thing happened which no one could have foreseen. The King, as a last hope, placed himself in the hands of the Lowland army, then encamped

before the town of Newark, hoping that it would take his side. But Lord Leven claimed him as his prisoner and marched back with him to Newcastle-on-Tyne. There an attempt was made to make terms between him and the Commons, whose offers the Scottish leaders "with tears" begged him to accept, as indeed the Queen herself did. But the King was determined to delay, still hoping that, through the quarrels of the people, he might feel himself really King again, and rule as he pleased. When the Scottish army, at length, had to return to Scotland, and could not take the King with them, because he would not promise what they asked, they at last gave him up to the Parliament, which paid them a large sum of money for the services they had rendered to England. Charles was now compelled to order Montrose to dismiss his troops and give up the towns and castles he had taken. A safe passage was, however, secured for him to France, where he lived for a time, and where the French wanted him for their army, because he was so good a soldier. Of him we shall hear again.

The King, meantime, was brought as a prisoner to Hampton Court. From thence he escaped to the Isle of Wight, but again found himself a prisoner at Carisbrooke Castle, where the window is still shown through which he tried to escape. But the army which had won so many victories was now stronger than the Parliament; and—being tired of the King's obstinacy and lack of truth—its leaders decided that he must be tried for treason against the liberties of the country.

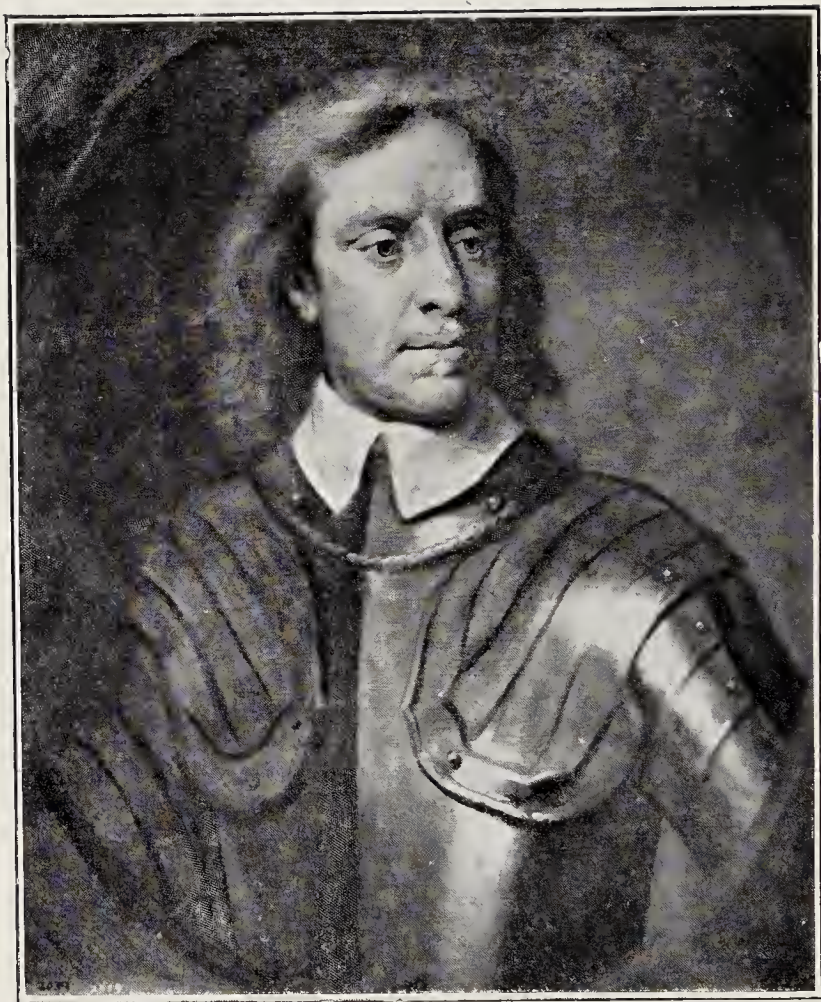
How this was brought about it would take too long to tell. A hundred and thirty-five persons were

selected to form a Court, consisting of lawyers and citizens, with some officers of the army; and John Bradshaw, Sergeant-at-law, was chosen President. The trial took place in Westminster Hall, and lasted a week. The King defended himself with much ability, but at the end of the week he was pronounced guilty, and doomed to die. As he passed out of the grand old hall, one soldier, feeling sympathy for the doomed King, ventured to say "God bless you, Sir," for which his officer struck him—showing how cruel the habit of war will make even good people.

Many attempts were made to save his life. The ambassadors from Holland—the Scottish leaders, the Prince of Wales and the Queen, from France, all begged that the King's life should be spared; but his judges were determined not to trust him again. But though he had great faults as a king, he now showed his best qualities as a man, and calmly resigned himself to God's will and prepared to die. None of his family were in England except his two youngest children, the Princess Elizabeth, aged thirteen, and the little Duke of Gloucester, who was only nine. They were brought to him at St. James' Palace to bid him farewell, and he took a most affectionate leave of the weeping children, with loving words and fatherly advice.

The next morning—the thirtieth of January—the King went across St. James' Park, to Whitehall, guarded by an escort of soldiers. He walked at his usual quick pace through the park, ordering his guards to "march on." The scaffold was set up outside the great Banqueting House, which had so often been filled with gay and merry guests, and was now hung

with solemn black, while the street was crowded with mounted troops and awe-struck people. A good Bishop named Juxon said to him some comforting words, and he told the executioner that he should say very short prayers, and then spread out his hands as the signal for him to strike. One blow of the sharp axe ended his life, and a great groan burst from the waiting crowd, many of whom then, and for long afterwards, called him "King Charles the Martyr."



OLIVER CROMWELL.

CHAPTER XXXIV

CROMWELL AND HIS IRONSIDES

1649-1660

THE news that the people of England had put their King to death awoke much horror and indignation throughout Europe. As we know, other English kings had been dethroned, and afterwards killed much more cruelly, but it was by secret murder, not by public execution ; and many people in England thought it a great crime. The deed was really done by the army and a small portion of the Long Parliament, the majority having been first turned out. No one heard of it with greater anger and sorrow than the Marquis of Montrose, who was still an exile in France, and one of his finest poems was a lamentation for his King. He at once offered his services to the Prince of Wales in Holland, who now, though uncrowned, took the title of Charles II. Montrose returned to Scotland at the risk of his life, and landed in Caithness, where he tried to raise an army, but met with little success. Very soon his small force was surprised and he, with two of his friends, had to wander about, disguised as peasants, among the wild northern hills, often suffering from hunger and cold. At last, having lost his companions, and trusted to a false guide, he

was betrayed into the hands of his bitter enemies, and knew that he had no mercy to expect.

He was taken to Edinburgh, where he was tried and condemned as a traitor, though Argyle and the other leaders were at that very time offering to receive Charles II as King on condition of his agreeing to their conditions. Montrose died very bravely on a high scaffold in the "Grassmarket" of Edinburgh, looking, as has been said, more like a conqueror than a condemned man, holding high his handsome head, with its long curling locks, and looking with fearless eyes at the rough crowd which his gallant bearing touched with sympathy and sorrow. A Scottish poet thus describes him, passing to the fate which some of his judges afterwards shared :—

" He is coming ! he is coming !
Like a bridegroom from his room,
Came the hero from his prison
To the scaffold and the doom.
There was glory on his forehead,
There was lustre in his eye,
And he never walked to battle
More proudly than to die ! "

Very soon after this the Scottish leaders brought the young King over to Scotland, where he agreed to all they wanted, just because this suited his purpose at the time. He not only signed the Covenant to please them, but also a paper declaring that his father had ruled as a tyrant. He was sent for safety to the old royal palace of Dunfermline, where he was kept more like a prisoner than a king. The English General, Cromwell, had at this time gone to Ireland, which was also in arms to make young Charles king ; but as soon as he had conquered

there, with great slaughter, he brought an army to Scotland. There he fought a famous battle at Dunbar, with the Scottish army under General Leslie, who had so lately been helping the army of the Parliament. But though Leslie was a brave general, and had many well-trained soldiers, he was utterly defeated. Three thousand were slain, and ten thousand were taken prisoners. Leslie himself escaped to Edinburgh, "a general without an army."

The young King remained with his Scottish subjects about a year, and as the destruction of Leslie's army had given more power to his friends, he insisted on being crowned at Scone, and taking part in the Council. When summer came again, Charles resolved to take his army into England, and marched as far as Worcester. There he fought a stiff battle with Cromwell's force, which lasted till nightfall. But the Scottish force was again defeated, with a loss of six thousand men; this time Leslie himself was made prisoner, and most of the gentlemen who had been on the side of Charles were killed.

The young King escaped, but had to hide himself from his enemies. A large reward was offered to any one who would find and take him prisoner. But though many people knew where he was, no one would betray him. For months he wandered about the country, as Montrose had done, living as he best could, sometimes hidden in country houses, and having many narrow escapes. The first place where he got shelter, after the battle, was a farm named Boscobel, where he was cared for by some poor wood-cutters, who gave him their own clothes to wear, so that the soldiers he met might not know who he was. One night he had to climb

into an oak-tree and hide himself among the branches, where the leaves were so thick that the soldiers did not see him, though he could hear them say, as they passed, that they were sure he must be somewhere thereabouts.

His shoes were soon worn out, and the wood-cutters found a horse for him, to take him to another place, as he was too footsore to walk. A lady took him to Bristol, disguised in a woman's dress, as her servant, in the hope of finding there a ship to take him to France. But as there was no ship ready to sail, he was sheltered in the house of a colonel named Wyndham, where all the family and the servants knew him; but no one told the secret. At last he got a ship to take him to Sussex, and from thence he reached France in safety, and did not return to England for a long time.

While Cromwell was following the young King in England, another general named Monk subdued and settled Scotland, and the three kingdoms, England, Scotland and Ireland were all brought under the rule of Britain about the time when Charles II escaped to France.

But the English people had been passing through a very troubled time, for there were so many differences among them that it was very hard to agree to any settled government. The Puritans had been for some time called "Roundheads," because they sensibly wore their hair cut short, and the gentlemen who took the side of the King in the Civil War were still called "Cavaliers," so that England was now in a great degree divided into "Cavaliers" and "Roundheads." Many of the Cavaliers were honourable and high-minded gentlemen who would not do anything base or mean;

but many were easy-going and careless, fond of jollity and feasting and of what people call "a good time"; and were by no means very particular about doing right. There was also a great deal of drinking and swearing among them, especially among the troopers, who were often rough and reckless. The Cavaliers generally rode on horseback, dressed handsomely and wore their hair long, or else wore wigs; and looked very well in pictures; whereas the Puritans dressed plainly and soberly, much as gentlemen do now.

The Puritans were in general good and sensible men, very earnest and anxious to do right, and careful in speech as well as in action. They were often laughed at by the Cavaliers, because they loved to read the Bible and sing the beautiful old Psalms. Perhaps this and the wrongs they had suffered from King Charles and his bad advisers made them grow rather hard and stern, and very strongly set in their own opinions. The worst thing about them was, that some of them were unwilling that any one else should think or worship differently from themselves. Many of them had now become Presbyterians, and had agreed with the Scottish leaders that the Church of England should be made just like that of Scotland, and a large number of ministers, with the great and good Richard Baxter among them, had met at Westminster for five years to arrange this in what they thought the best way.

But there were other Puritans, who were called by the long name of "Independents," who did not think it necessary that everybody should worship in exactly the same way, but believed that, since people cannot all think just alike, each should worship according to his conscience. The "Men of the *Mayflower*" be-

longed to this kind of Puritans, and we have seen how they left their beloved England for the sake of this *liberty of conscience*. The English "Nonconformists," as they were afterwards called, always stood up for this liberty at that time and have done so ever since, and Richard Baxter stood up for it in the great Westminster Assembly. But unfortunately they could not get the rest of the people to see how much trouble and misery it would have saved.

For a good while after the death of King Charles I, the "Long Parliament" continued in power, though many even of the Puritans thought there should be a new election. The three great leaders were all gone now. John Hampden had died from wounds in battle and Pym had died before the Civil War began, and there did not seem to be any left who were of their stamp; though many necessary and good things were done.

But that Parliament kept on sitting year after year, though the officers of the army which had placed them in power insisted that they should have a new election. However they had to reckon with a new leader whose power became more and more felt. This was Oliver Cromwell, whose name will never be forgotten in England; for he was one of the greatest generals and strongest rulers she has ever had. We have seen how he brought Ireland and Scotland into subjection, and he was now to bring troubled England into peace and order.

Oliver Cromwell was born about the end of the reign of Queen Elizabeth—the son of a squire near Huntingdon. He went to Cambridge first, but was called home by the death of his father, and afterwards settled at St.

Ives. The town of Cambridge sent him as its member to both the Short and the Long Parliament. When Pym's "Grand Remonstrance" was passed in the House, Cromwell said, "If it had been rejected I would have sold to-morrow all that I possess, and left England forever." As he then appeared to others in the House, he was a good-sized man in a plain country-made suit, with a sharp voice and "eloquence full of fervour." It was when the famous victory of Marston Moor was won by him, that he first became known as a great general and leader.

Cromwell saw that there was much lack of good men in the army of the Parliament, which was at first largely made up of prentice lads, and he said that unless they could get better soldiers, they could never beat the brave Cavaliers. So he set to work to raise a regiment of a thousand "men of religion" for himself. Even Hampden doubted whether it could be done. But Cromwell did it, and spent his own fortune freely in fitting out his men. He declared that they were "a lovely company," in which there was "neither swearing, drinking, disorder nor impiety." After that it seemed possible to get an army of "Honest Men," and the twenty thousand who, in the end, won the great victories for the Parliament, were of the same kind of God-fearing men as the "Ironsides" of Cromwell—as they were called. To them the war in which they were engaged was a Holy War, and as such they waged it.

This army, led by Cromwell and his son-in-law Ireton, gained so much control that it kept the Parliament in awe, and refused to disband until it could see that it had not fought in vain. Many of the soldiers had

fought long at their own cost, and stood for liberty of conscience in matters of religion. The old Parliament at last broke up, and a new one was elected, in which for the first time there were representatives from Scotland and Ireland, though only thirty from each, so that it might be called a British Parliament, although the three kingdoms were still separately governed. But Cromwell wanted the Parliament to get to work at settling and healing the nation, and as it spent so much time over things which he thought less important, he got out of patience with it at last, and finally turned it out and locked the doors.

Then the army, which still considered itself responsible for the good order of the "Commonwealth" (or kingdom), insisted that Cromwell should become ruler of it himself, under the name of Protector, and rule for a time without a Parliament. It seemed strange for Cromwell to do this, when he had begun by fighting for the rights of the Parliament, but he saw that while the nation was so divided it was necessary for some one person to have full power to restore order. It is probable that he did not take this power because he wanted it for his own sake, for he did not seem to care for the burden of governing, nor did he wish to keep it any longer than was necessary, so that his rule was quite different from that of King Charles, who wanted to keep the power always in his own hands.

So Cromwell ruled for some years without a Parliament, and ruled so well that many said England had better times than ever before. He put down all wrong and violence with a strong hand, did equal justice to all, and would not allow any of the people to be punished for worshipping as they thought right. Even

the Jews, who had been driven out of England in the days of Edward I, and had never been allowed to come back—now found a little liberty to settle again in London and Oxford. But he was very severe, and even cruel, in putting down rebellion in Ireland, and in punishing those who had taken part in the Massacre in Ulster, and whole towns there were left deserted, while the people were sent away across the sea. He believed that this was necessary in order to make Ireland peaceful; but the memories of this harsh treatment made the old enmity more bitter. The Scots thought him hard, too, because he conquered their rebellious forces, and made laws for Scotland which he sent his judges to put in force. But he made the name of Britain a power both by land and sea; and when the Protestants of Savoy were massacred because of their religion, he sent word to their ruler that he would not let such things be. And whenever British subjects were oppressed or injured abroad, he sent his brave Chief Admiral Blake with a fleet to punish the wrong, whether it were done by Spaniards or Portuguese, Turks or Algerians. As England had got into trouble with Holland, the Dutch Admiral Van Tromp had been defying England by sailing about in the Channel with a broom at his mast-head. Then Blake and he fought two battles at sea. One of them lasted all day with 100 ships on each side, and in the second, Van Tromp was killed, and peace soon followed.

As things grew more settled, Cromwell had leisure to form a plan of government for Britain, which he tried to do after the pattern of the old Charters. He called more than one Parliament, and wished to have

the government of the kingdom conducted by the laws, instead of by the army. His second Parliament wished him to take the title of King, which would have made it easier for him to rule. But he knew that the army hated the name of king, and he was quite content with that of Lord High Protector, and the title of "Your Highness." Instead of being crowned and anointed in Westminster Abbey, he was solemnly enthroned in Westminster Hall, clad in a purple robe, girded with the sword of state and presented with a splendid Bible. And though his power was not supposed to descend from father to son, he was allowed to name his son as his successor. Altogether, there never was a rule like that of Cromwell, and it is not likely that there ever will be again.

Neither was there ever an army just like that of the Parliament, which watched over the rights of England as long as it seemed its duty to do so, and then quietly made way for the new ruler. When Cromwell's death left his post to his son Richard, he held it but a few months. He was in many ways an estimable man, but he had not his father's strong hand, and nothing else could hold England in peace. When General Monk, who had been at the head of the army in Scotland, came south and agreed with a large part of the English nation to call Charles II to the throne, the "Ironsides" could have either prevented this, or plunged England again into Civil War. Instead, they quietly disbanded, and went back to earn their bread in the humble callings of ordinary life. Though they had done such great things in saving England from tyranny and oppression, and had made their country a great power in Europe, they now settled quietly down

to peaceful industry, and showed their true goodness in doing good work in these ; so that, if a man were a better farmer or baker or artisan than any others, it was pretty certain to be said of him that he was one of Oliver Cromwell's old " Ironsides."

CHAPTER XXXV

CHARLES II AND THE GREAT PLAGUE

1660-1685.

THE people of England in general, who did not like to be without a king, were greatly pleased when it was agreed by their leaders to call their exiled prince to fill his father's throne. It was not the first time that they had been too hopeful in thinking that a new king would do better than the last one. But they never had reason to be more sadly disappointed in any than in Charles II. When he landed in England and rode to London, the church-bells rang joyously out, and the people crowded to welcome him. Even the great army which was now to be disbanded was drawn up in martial array on Blackheath just outside London, to silently salute him. When—on his thirtieth birthday—he and his brothers, at the head of a great procession, escorted by a train of Guards, with flags flying and trumpets sounding, came to the palace of Whitehall, outside which his father had been beheaded, he said—jokingly—that it must have been his own fault that he had not come long before, since everybody told him that they had always wished to have him back !

But he could not have forgotten how narrowly, in former days, he had escaped with his life. His experi-

ence of the loyalty of so many poor people might have taught him to prize faithfulness above all things, and to have a sincere regard for his loyal people. But it seemed as if nothing could teach him to care much for anything but his own pleasure and amusement, to which he was always ready to sacrifice the good of his kingdom and everything else. We have seen to what this had led others before him, and shall see to what it led him, though at first his frank and pleasant manners made him much liked.

As his chief desire was to amuse himself, he liked best to have gay and lively people about him, who could help him to enjoy himself according to his tastes, which were mostly for foolish and hurtful pleasures. Therefore his favourites were generally very worthless persons, who soon obtained too much power over the kingdom and set a very bad example to the people. As there was constant merry-making at Whitehall, a large number of the English who loved feasting and jollity were eager to copy the Court; and as the Puritans had now lost their power, the people in general got back, not only their harmless Maypoles, but also such brutal sports as bull-baiting and cock-fighting, which helped to make them more coarse and cruel, and also led to much drunkenness.

The King had promised, before he was brought back, that he would respect all the rights and liberties of his subjects, and that all should be permitted to worship God according to their own consciences. But—as soon as he obtained from Parliament a grant of more than a million pounds a year for life—he forgot these solemn promises, being more concerned to punish the men who had condemned his father to death.

The next Parliament, elected while the people were excited about the splendid coronation, was filled with "Cavaliers," or Tories as they now began to be called, while the "Roundheads" now began to be called "Whigs." This name is said to have come from the Scottish word "*whay*," while that of Tories came from the bogs of Ireland. Both long continued to stand for the two great sets or "parties" of people in Britain—the Tories generally clinging to what was old and familiar, while the Whigs generally preferred new ways, which they believed better. Just then, the greater part of the people, pleased with their "Merry Monarch," the splendour of his Court, their fine clothes and entertainments, were quite willing to join with the Tories in wanting the old ways restored, in spite of the King's promises to both the Puritans and the Presbyterians that they should continue, unmolested, to worship God in the way their consciences approved—the rightness of which should have been seen by this time.

But the new Parliament did not see it, and agreed that there should be just one Church for the whole people, governed by bishops, to whom all must submit, and that any who should attend any other place of worship should be considered guilty of a crime, and, for a third offence, should be banished from the country. Such persons, though banished, were not even to be allowed to go to New England, whither so many Englishmen had already gone to seek freedom. And as many of the parish clergy were now Puritans or Presbyterians they were turned out of their parishes and imprisoned if they tried to preach anywhere else.

Among the other things that were done by this same Parliament, was the trial and barbarous execution of a

number of the men, now called "regicides," who had taken any part in bringing Charles I to the scaffold. Another of the Puritan leaders, Sir Harry Vane, who had no share in this act, was beheaded because he had supplied the evidence on which Strafford was condemned. As he was not allowed to be heard when he tried to speak to the people on Tower Hill, he simply said—"It is a bad cause that cannot bear the words of a dying man"—and bravely died.

The "Cavaliers" were not content with this, but even tore out of their graves the bodies of Cromwell, Ireton and Bradshaw, dragged them to Tyburn, where criminals were put to death, hanged and then beheaded the lifeless remains, and set their heads on poles, to be stared at by all the coarse and cruel people who could take pleasure in such a sight. Even Cromwell's wife and daughter were not spared, for the base clergy of the Abbey at that time gave up their bodies to be thrown rudely into a pit, along with those of the brave John Pym and Admiral Blake. But time sets most wrongs right, and to-day a noble statue of Oliver Cromwell stands just outside the Houses of Parliament, a sign of the honour in which Britain holds the memory of one of her truest patriots and strongest rulers.

For the first few years after Charles II became king, he still had some old and wise counsellors—"Ministers" as we now call those who specially attend to the business of the State. One of these was Edward Hyde, Lord Clarendon, whose daughter was the wife of James, Duke of York, the King's younger brother. He was willing to help the King to rule in accordance with the laws of Parliament, though he disliked the Puritans, and wished to see the King more powerful

than the Parliament. By his advice, Charles arranged to marry a Portuguese princess named Catherine, to whom her father gave the island of Bombay, in India, as a wedding-gift. This was made over by the King to the East India Company which had been formed, under Elizabeth, in 1599, and it made the beginning of our vast Indian Empire.

But Clarendon advised other things which the people much disliked. For one thing, the stronghold of Dunkirk, which Cromwell had won from Spain, was sold to Louis XIV of France, while a needless war was begun with the Dutch, arising out of the wicked trade in African slaves that began about this time, and not only cost the lives of thousands, but ended badly for England. For the Dutch fleet sailed up the Thames and burned many houses and ships, just as the Danes used to do in the old times. But for such things Charles cared little, so long as he could feast and amuse himself with his silly companions.

But in the midst of all the revelling and wickedness that had spread through London, there came upon the city one of the most terrible calamities that it had ever suffered. This was a visitation of the frightful disease called the Plague, which arose, in the first place, from neglect of cleanliness in people's ways of living. In May, 1667, it began to be rumoured that many people had died of it, in some of the poorer parts of London, where the streets and houses were unwholesome from lack of cleanliness—such as St. Giles and Holborn, then outside the city proper. As soon as it became known that people were really dying of it in great numbers, the Court and the rich people left town at once, and the roads were crowded with families, escap-

ing in all sorts of conveyances, or on horseback, as best they could. The old writer Defoe, in his interesting story of it, says that, though all the people did not leave London, nearly all the horses did, being needed to carry away the people and their luggage. But there were a few left to draw the dead-carts, which rumbled along the dark streets at night and stopped at every house in which were people sick of the Plague. The men who drove them, with faces covered, rang a doleful bell, and called out in solemn tones—"Bring out your dead!" These houses were all shut up as soon as any one was known to be ill, the doors being marked with a red cross and the words—"Lord have mercy upon us!" No one was allowed to go in or out, lest the infection should be carried to others. Sometimes the people who were well would make their escape, leaving their sick friends to die alone. Sometimes the fathers and mothers both died, and the children were almost starved, because there was no one to take care of them. One mother whose baby took the terrible disease, shut herself up with it, all alone, and saved her child's life. Sometimes fathers and mothers would follow the dead-cart in despair, for on it lay the bodies of all their children—not one left!

The dead were buried, all together, in common graves—or great pits—by torchlight, without any ceremony, for no one liked to remain a moment in such a dreadful place. Streets became empty and silent, save for the tramp of the watchmen, or the hoarse cry of those who came to bear away the dead. Some went mad with fear, and ran wildly about, shouting—"Lord, have mercy upon us!" Some, in despair, threw themselves into the Thames. And some very wicked men con-

fessed their crimes aloud, imploring God's forgiveness. Yet, though many places of amusement were closed, much of the drinking and gambling went on as before ; some wretched men persisting in their revelling and profanity, while their companions were sickening and until they were themselves struck down.

The Plague seemed to travel from west to east, till what had been the busiest parts of the city were empty and desolate. Some parishes buried about one thousand in a week, during its greatest severity, and it was believed that at least a hundred thousand people died of it. In order to check the infection, all the dogs and cats in the city were killed, and it was said that forty thousand dogs and four or five times as many cats were destroyed. The trade and business of the country were at a stand-still, and as many workshops were closed, great numbers of people were deprived of work—which added greatly to the misery of the time. Foreign countries did not want goods from places where the Plague was raging ; and as ships and sailors did not come to trade with London at such a time, it may easily be seen what distress the dreaded disease brought—not only to London, but to all England. At last, when the people were almost in despair, and had no hope but in the mercy of God, the autumn winds began to blow away the bad air that had caused the disease, and all at once the deaths grew fewer. Gradually the death-carts ceased to go about the city and the red crosses disappeared from the doors. Then those who had fled returned to their homes and opened their shops ; and the streets became filled with people as before.

But the Plague might have returned again, if there had not soon followed another great calamity, which

was not altogether an evil in the long run, though it caused much suffering and terror at the time when it happened. On September 3 a fire broke out in a baker's shop near London Bridge. A high wind gave it such headway that it could not be subdued; and as the summer had been very hot and dry, the wood and plaster houses on both sides of the narrow streets caught fire so quickly and burned so fiercely that a great part of London was soon in a blaze, and burnt fiercely for three days and nights. The wind carried the sparks and hot ashes far and wide, so that new fires broke out in twenty places at once; and while clouds of smoke covered the city by day, a pillar of fire at night lighted up the whole country around. It stopped only when there were no more houses to burn, and the whole of what is still called "*the city*," from the Tower to Temple Bar, was laid in ashes. Eighty-nine churches and eighteen thousand houses were now heaps of smoking ruins.

The people fled before the fire, as they had fled before the Plague, carrying with them all that they had been able to save. Many loaded carts broke down and blocked up the streets and lanes; and thousands of homeless families had to sleep in the fields, under the open sky, or in little huts of mud or straw, until fitter shelter could be built. Many of the deserted, plague-stricken houses must have been burned with all they contained, which was no doubt a great help in preventing further infection. And when the city was rebuilt, this was done with more care. The streets were much cleaner, and some of them were widened, though hardly enough. More trouble was taken to make the homes, also, more wholesome, for Englishmen

had begun to learn that in order to live healthy and happy lives, God's laws of health and cleanliness must be obeyed, and that it is wrong and foolish to neglect any of His laws, and then expect Him to prevent the consequences.

At this time there were supposed to be about five and a half millions of people in all Britain, of whom one million and a half lived in London, which is less than a third of its population now. A large part of what is now the finest and most splendid part of London was then pasture-land, woods and fields. But the inhabited part was so closely built up, that—before the fire—many of the streets and alleys were too narrow for carts to pass each other. If any Londoner of that age could see the stately, well-built London of to-day, he would not know it for the same city.

We cannot wonder that many people looked upon the Plague and the Great Fire as judgments of God upon the wickedness that prevailed in England then. And though the destruction of goods and clothing by the fire quickly increased the business of the country, the miseries and distractions of the people were growing greater under the silly "Merry Monarch," who soon showed himself more false and treacherous than his father had been. So false, indeed, was he, under all his pleasant manners, that he did not believe in truth and goodness at all; and he was too lazy to insist on the right or prevent a wrong. We have seen how he allowed his Cavalier Parliament to forbid the Puritans to worship in their own way, and to drive away their ministers. As it happened, it was on St. Bartholomew's Day—the anniversary of the massacre of the Huguenots in Paris, in the time of Queen Elizabeth—

that about two thousand good men were driven out from their churches and rectories, because they would not agree to use the form of worship that had been appointed for all—which they did not entirely approve. And though in the dreadful time of the Plague, when such differences of opinion seemed for a time forgotten, many of these clergymen came back to their empty churches to comfort their distressed people, a brutal law was made in the very next year, forbidding any of these banished ministers to come within five miles of a town, or of any place where they had been used to preach. This meant that they could have no means of earning a living, except the roughest and hardest drudgery; for they were not even permitted to be teachers of children. The great and good Richard Baxter, who was one of those turned out then, tells us of their privations:—

“Many hundreds of them, with their wives and children, had neither house nor bread. Though they were as frugal as possible, they could hardly live. Some lived on little more than brown bread and water, many had eight or ten pounds a year to maintain a family; their allowance could scarcely afford them bread and cheese. One went to plough six days, and preached on the Lord’s Day. Another was forced to cut tobacco for a livelihood.” And those who still felt that they ought to preach whenever they had an opportunity, were sent to gaol, where many of them died of the foul air and confinement. It was true that many excellent clergymen had been turned out of the parishes when the Puritans were in power, and harshness always provokes harshness in return. But *those* clergymen were not put in gaol or made to suffer as these good men were now.

Among those who were kept for years in prison at this time was John Bunyan, whose name and fame are known wherever English is spoken and English books are read, and who preached so well and so earnestly that many who heard him were led to live better lives. But because he would not stop preaching to please the King, he was kept for twelve years in Bedford Gaol, separated from his wife and children, which was a great trial to him, especially as one of his children—much loved by him—was blind. But he did not waste those years in repining, and spent his time partly in earning his own living, by making shoe-laces, and partly in writing some books, which many love to read to-day. His greatest book—the *Pilgrim's Progress*—is one of the best books in the English language, and is, by many, set next to the Bible.

Badly as these good men were used, the Scottish Presbyterians were treated even worse. The King broke up the Union which his grandfather had made between England and Scotland and Ireland, and sent to Scotland a harsh Governor called Middleton, to rule it in his name. The old Covenant, which Charles had signed and which most of the Scottish people revered, was burned by the hangman, and the people were ordered to give up their own Church, which they loved, and worship according to the rules of the English Church. Many of them felt that they could not do this, and preferred to worship in the fields or among the hills, wherever they could find a hiding-place from the rough soldiers, who hunted and often shot them down like wild animals, for doing what they believed right. The Marquis of Argyle, who tried to stand up for their rights, was unjustly accused of treason, and beheaded.

Afterwards—when the Earl of Lauderdale went to rule instead of Middleton—though the Earl was himself a Scotsman, he treated his countrymen with even greater cruelty, and sometimes put men, women and children to the torture, in order to make them tell what they knew about others. Those were cruel times, and it was not surprising that some young men attacked and murdered an Archbishop named Sharpe, who had helped to bring about these troubles, just as the cruel Cardinal Beaton had been murdered many years before. The Scots at last rose in arms to defend their rights, but were defeated with great loss at a place called Bothwell Bridge. Afterwards the King sent his hard-hearted brother, James, the Duke of York, to be Governor, who was even more bent on torturing and killing people on account of their religious belief. Indeed he seemed to enjoy seeing their sufferings, and many were driven almost mad by the brutal deeds that were done.

While such wicked things were going on, with the King's consent, it is no wonder that the English people fell into a wretched state, much like that which the Wars of the Roses had produced. When wrong-doing of all sorts went on openly at Court, cheating and dishonesty abounded among the people, property lost its value, the defences of the nation were neglected, the ships became rotten, the sailors starved, and there was discontent everywhere. When the nation was enraged by the success of the Dutch raid, Lord Clarendon fell into great discredit, and was obliged to escape to France. After that the King had five Ministers or Councillors—none of them good men—named Clifford, Arlington, Buckingham, Ashley and Lauderdale ; and as

the initials of these names spelled the word *Cabal*, these five were called *The Cabal*, and from this comes that English word, as we use it to-day. And between their plotting and the King's plotting, and plots among the people, Britain fell into great trouble and distress.

France had grown very powerful at this time, and its King—Louis XIV—who was very ambitious and determined, was trying to make himself master of all the countries around him, and especially to conquer Spain and Holland. He was an enemy to Protestants, and drove all the Huguenots—or French Protestants—out of his kingdom. The English people were pleased when the King made peace with the Dutch, and agreed to help Holland and Flanders against Louis. But this was scarcely done when the King made a secret bargain with Louis, by which he bound himself to become a Roman Catholic, and to bring England again under the Pope, and also to help Louis to secure Holland and Spain and the Spanish Netherlands, on condition of receiving a handsome salary each year. This was, of course, to make England a sort of “vassal (or servant) to France” and it would have made the nation so angry, if it had been found out, that the King dared to tell no one except two of his Ministers, who, he thought, would keep the secret. Shortly after this, to save money enough for a new war with Holland, the Government broke faith with the merchants who had lent it large sums of money, and caused great distress among the people. Then, all at once, the King, as Head of the Church, declared that no one should any longer suffer in any way for difference of worship, so that many good ministers now came back to their parishes, John Bunyan was set free from his prison,

and thousands of persecuted Quakers could now obey their consciences without molestation.

But many even of the people who gained by this decree did not approve of it, because they saw that the King was trying in this way to give the Roman Catholics more power in the country. He had placed some of them in command of the army he was raising to attack Protestant Holland ; and the Duke of York, the heir to the Crown, was suspected—and soon known—to be one. So the Parliament decided that such a decree could not be made without its consent, and passed what was called a “ Test Act,” insisting that every one employed by the State should promise faithfully to obey the laws of the State and of the Church of England. Then the Duke of York owned himself a Roman Catholic, and gave up his office of High Admiral, while hundreds of other officials had to resign theirs. It soon began to be suspected that Charles himself was no longer a Protestant, and to pacify the people his Minister, Ashley—now Lord Shaftesbury—tried, with others, to have a law made that if a royal prince should marry any but a Protestant wife, he should lose all right to succeed the King.

This, however, did not pass ; but Lord Danby—a new Minister, who was now made Lord Treasurer, and who wished to pacify England—did the country a great service when he secured the Protestant education of the Princess Mary, the eldest daughter of the Duke of York, and made secret arrangements for her marriage with her cousin William, the young Prince of Orange, who was now fighting for the freedom of Holland, and who was, in time, to set that of Britain on a sure and lasting basis.

In the meantime, there was much uneasiness and discontent in the country, and plots were heard of on all sides. There was a supposed "Popish plot" for which a venerable peer called Stafford was beheaded without any just reason, and then there was a supposed Whig plot. The good Lord Russell was executed for no cause but that of consulting to keep the King from fulfilling some of his secret evil designs. The King had had to dismiss his "Cabal" or Cabinet, and to do several good things against his will, and in 1678 the House of Commons was thunderstruck by the sight of a paper showing that the King had been demanding payment from Louis XIV for services to France. This made them so angry that the King had to disband the large army he had been collecting, and to dismiss his adviser, Lord Danby, whose name was signed to the paper, and who was then impeached (or accused) for the treason of the King.

The people of England now became so much afraid of the rule of a Roman Catholic king—such as they knew James would be—that a number of the leaders, with Shaftesbury at their head, tried in several ways to prevent him from succeeding to the throne on the death of Charles. Some of them wished to make Mary, the Princess of Orange, the next heir to the crown, which, if it could have been done, would have prevented great misery to the nation. But unhappily Shaftesbury was set on making the young Duke of Monmouth the heir, and as the others did not think him the true heir, the English Parliament was too loyal to agree to it.

Some good things, however, were agreed on before the reign of Charles came to an end. One of these was to secure the "liberty of the press," so that none could

be prevented from printing, any more than for saying, what they thought right. Another was the "Habeas Corpus Act," to prevent any one from being sent to prison without being fairly tried. This was part of the Magna Charta, but had often been forgotten, and though, for a time, it was not fully carried out, it is now one of the great safeguards of British freedom. But at this time, through bad government, the public roads were very unsafe, being infested by lawless men who lived by highway robbery. For the poor working people were so badly paid, that many of them could not earn more than sixpence a day, and as many of these were very ignorant, never having even learned to read, it was no wonder if they took to dishonesty and wicked ways.

Neither was it strange that, after Milton and Bunyan, there were few great writers, and some of these used their powers for unworthy ends. However, some learned Englishmen banded themselves together to study the nature of the world in which we live, and find out all they could about "Natural Science." It was at this time that the famous Sir Isaac Newton lived, and made his great discoveries of laws whereby God orders the Universe. And though he was always a quiet student, he sat and voted in some of the Parliaments which stood for the freedom of England. Then also lived the great architect, Sir Christopher Wren, who rebuilt the grand Church of St. Paul's, after the Great Fire. But there were few painters or sculptors in Britain, for those whose portraits of Englishmen and women come down to us from that age, were mostly Dutch or Germans, French or Flemish.

King Charles was still pursuing his plans for deceiv-

ing his advisers and tyrannizing over his people, by means of a standing army which he could pay with the help of France, when—in the midst of the frivolities of his Court—he was struck down by sudden illness. A few days ended a life and reign which had laid up much trouble for the future ; though, because of his pleasant manners, Charles died much more regretted than he deserved to be by many of the people whom he had so badly ruled.

CHAPTER XXXVI

THE SEVEN BISHOPS AND THE COMING OF THE PRINCE

1686-1689

IF the reign of Charles II had been an unhappy one for England, that of his brother James was still more so. Indeed it would be hard to find, in the history of Britain since the Norman Conquest, four years more full of misery and oppression than the short reign of James II. Although as Duke of York he had shown himself a merciless bigot, some hoped that he might make a better King than his brother, because he was *not false*, saying that they had now a King who "would not be worse than his word." But he was so hard-hearted and cruel, so self-willed and obstinate, that people soon saw that he could hardly be worse than his word, and began to think that the "Merry Monarch" had been rather a pleasant ruler compared with his stony-hearted brother.

At his coronation, however, he promised, like Charles, to uphold the laws and the government, as by law established. But he soon showed that, instead of keeping this promise, he was determined to force on the people his own royal will and pleasure, without any regard to their good, or liberty of conscience.

At first he got a Parliament together that seemed willing to do as he desired, though it contained one man, called Seymour, who was not afraid to say that it was unfairly elected. James, however, thought himself above the law, with power to give orders contrary to it, especially in regard to religious matters. At first, indeed, he professed that he wished no one's religious belief interfered with. But he soon showed that this was not his object, for while he had Mass publicly celebrated, contrary to the laws of the kingdom, he imprisoned, and persecuted good men and great preachers like Baxter and Howe, and stopped the Bishop of London from exercising his office because he would not carry out the King's unlawful commands. In Scotland his tyranny was still worse, for he had got the Scottish Parliament to make still more cruel laws against the Scottish Covenant than those he had formerly put in force there. And, as often happens, he found cruel men to enforce them.

One of his Scottish officers, John Grahame of Claverhouse, though a brave soldier, was reckless and hard-hearted, as few brave soldiers are. He seemed to hate the poor Covenanters, and he and his men rode about among the Scottish hills and dales, hunting down good men and women for worshipping God in the way they had been used to do. There are many sad tales told of the brutal deeds done by this man and his troopers, who were always searching the country ; and if they found a few people meeting in some retired spot, to hear one of their own ministers preach to them, they would shoot them down as if they had been bears or wolves. Sometimes they killed good, quiet people in their own homes, because they would

not go back from what they believed. One of these was named John Brown, and as he carried parcels about the country, he was called "the Christian Carrier." Because he was an earnest Covenanter, and opposed to the King's harsh laws, Claverhouse, who found him quietly cutting turf near his own house shot him down with his own hand, even while he was praying to God. His wife, who was present, told the reckless officer that a day would come when he would have to answer for his sin, and it was said that he was never able to forget that good man's dying prayer.

Many other things, as cruel as this, were done with the King's approval. One of the worst was the murder of two poor women—a girl of eighteen, and an aged woman—both named Margaret—who were tied to stakes on the sea-shore, that they might be drowned when the tide came up, because they would not say what they did not believe. And a poor widow, who had sheltered a dying Covenanter, had her house pulled down and her brave young son, a mere boy, dragged before Claverhouse and shot. For many years after the people there hated the very name of Claverhouse, and of the King in whose name such things were done.

In Ireland there was still much enmity between the native Roman Catholic Irish and the English settlers, who were chiefly Protestants, and the only way to make Ireland peaceful and happy was to promote friendly feeling between them. But instead of trying to do this he put at the head of the army there a false and indolent man, Lord Tŷrconnell, formerly known as "Lying Dick Talbot," who turned out all the Protestant officers and filled the army with

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native Irish Catholics, who were allowed to harass the English settlers as much as they chose.

In England the King soon made it clear that he was determined to bring England again under the power of the Pope. He dismissed his own brothers-in-law from high offices because they would not change their Church to please him, and did the same to many others. As many people in England soon saw what sort of a ruler James was determined to be they began to think about putting some one else in his place. The wiser ones thought it would be best to have patience until James should die, and his daughter Mary, the Princess of Orange, should become Queen, as was her right. For they knew that her husband, William, Prince of Orange, would make a wise and good ruler whom they could fully trust. But others—more especially those who had been driven from their own country—were too impatient to wait. Now King James had a nephew, called the Duke of Monmouth, who was very handsome and pleasant in his manners, and was a great favourite with the people. King Charles had put him at the head of the army that conquered the Covenanters at Bothwell Bridge, and the soldiers were very fond of him and would follow wherever he led. Because some had proposed to make him King on the death of Charles, he had been obliged to leave England and go to live at a town in Holland named The Hague, where the Prince of Orange lived. He was much liked there, also, for he was very gay and lively, and used to skate with his cousin, the Princess, and teach her to cut figures on the ice. But when King Charles died, he had to leave Holland and go to live in Brussels, on account of his uncle's jealousy. There

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were, at that time, a number of other Englishmen living abroad, because of the tyranny of King James. Some of these met together at Brussels, and persuaded the young Duke to try, with their help, to make himself King. One of these exiles was the noble Earl of Argyle, son of the Marquis beheaded by order of Charles, and who had himself been unjustly condemned for treason. After consulting together, and hearing much about the things that were happening in Britain, it was settled that, while Monmouth should lead one expedition into England, Argyle should lead another into Scotland, where he hoped to persuade many of the Highland Scots to join it.

Argyle's expedition was ready first, and he took his men into Scotland in three small ships, before Monmouth and his friends were quite ready to start. Argyle was a brave and good man, and thought he was doing what was best for Britain ; but he was hardly prudent enough, and the other leaders who went with him were always opposing his plans, so that he did not have a fair chance. He was greatly disappointed in his hopes of being joined by a large number of his fellow-countrymen ; though, like Montrose, he sent round a messenger with the " Fiery Cross." Sir Walter Scott, in *The Lady of the Lake*, has well described such a rousing of the Clansmen among the hills and glens.

" Benledi saw the cross of fire,
It glanced, like lightning, up Strathire,
O'er hill and dale the summons flew,
Nor rest nor peace young Angus knew ;

Each valley, each sequestered glen
Mustered its little horde of men,

Still gathering, as they poured along,
 A voice more loud, a tide more strong,
 Till at the rendez-vous they stood
 By hundreds, prompt for blows and blood,
 Each trained to arms since life began,
 Owning no tie, but to his clan ! ”

But this time the signal seemed to have lost much of its force, and Argyle was disappointed in the poor rally of his own clan—the Campbells—though he sent the summons by his own son. Some of the chiefs were exiles now, and some were in prison, and many were afraid to have anything to do with so dangerous a plan.

But while the leaders of it were divided as to their action, the King's troops were already warned and in motion. Argyle's three ships were soon taken, and when he tried to lead his little army to Glasgow, his men—fitter for wild mountain passes than Lowland moors—lost their way among the bogs, and gradually disappeared, through dread of the strong body of Militia before them. The leaders were caught and doomed to death for treason. Argyle met his fate with true Christian calmness and fortitude. He refused to betray any of his friends, and walked to his doom through the same old narrow streets by which Montrose had passed before, with the same dignity of bearing. There were some there who did not forget that his father had been the enemy of Montrose. But this Argyle died as no man's enemy, feeling at peace with all and commending his wife to God, “ in Whom all true comfort is to be found ”—one of the noblest of the many victims of this unhappy enterprise.

Monmouth's expedition—intended to follow that of

Argyle within a few days, was delayed by contrary winds. With his three ships he reached at last the coast of Devonshire, landing at the little rocky town of Lyme. His right-hand man was Lord Grey of Wask, who was not a good soldier or leader, and another was a foolish Scot named Ferguson, who injured his cause by a silly proclamation, full of falsehoods, accusing the King not only of things he had done, but of much that he had *not* done, such as poisoning his brother, and burning London.

Foolish and wrong as this was, however, it helped to stir up the simple people of Devonshire, many of whom had been Roundheads and attached to Monmouth when he had been there before. In twenty-four hours, 1,500 men were mustered, ready to fight for the "Protestant Duke," and the freedom of the country. Monmouth met with a grand reception in the old "Roundhead" town of Taunton, where he proclaimed himself "King Monmouth." The rejoicing people decked their windows with flowers in his honour, and a richly embroidered flag and a costly Bible were presented to him by a band of twenty young girls, gay in their best attire.

Encouraged by such warm feeling for his cause, the Duke marched on to another town named Bridgewater, where he encamped his army, now about six thousand strong. It might have been still larger if it had not been that the country folk were unarmed, and so had to turn their farming tools into weapons of war. Monmouth had expected that whole regiments of soldiers and many more of the discontented people would rally to his flag. But the Tories would not help him against the King, and the Whigs would not do

anything contrary to the rights of the Princess of Orange and her husband, while the Jacobites who had invited him soon lost heart and backed out. All the great nobles, the students of Oxford, the regiments of the King, rose in full force to resist him. His plans to take Bristol and Bath had to be given up—his troops were ill-equipped in every way, his horses mostly wild colts, and, in despair he even thought of giving up the contest without a battle, and escaping with his friends from the country. But Lord Grey, brave when he was not actually in battle—urged him to face any danger rather than desert the poor simple people who had flocked to his flag.

At last it was decided to make a night attack on the King's army, as it lay on the edge of a great marsh called Sedgemoor. There could not have been much hope of winning from the first. But the horsemen, under Lord Grey, were stopped by a deep ditch which they could not pass, and the fire of the King's men sent them flying in all directions. Many of the poor countrymen fought as well and bravely as if they had been trained soldiers, but without ammunition and support their struggle could not last long. The battle—the *last* ever fought *between English men on English soil*—was soon over. Three hundred of the King's soldiers lay dead or wounded, but of the poor peasants and miners, who did not understand that they were "rebels," more than a thousand lay dead on the moor. Many more were pursued by the cavalry and killed or taken prisoners, only to be hanged in chains, amid the joyous ringing of church-bells.

Monmouth and Grey, with a few of their friends, galloped off the field before the fight was quite over,

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hoping to hide for a time among the great oaks of the New Forest. When their horses were tired out, they disguised themselves in poor clothing, and went on their way on foot. But many scouts were watching for them, and Grey was soon found. Then a closer search was made for Monmouth, who was found at last in a great field of grain, lying in a ditch under fern and brambles, clad in the dress of a shepherd, with a few peas in his pocket to stay his hunger, and looking very unlike the gay and handsome Duke of Monmouth.

He was soon brought a captive to London, and though he knew he had little mercy to expect, he besought an interview with his uncle, the King, and begged hard for his life. But King James was no more likely to forgive his nephew than King John had been to forgive Prince Arthur for fighting against him. And on the fifteenth of July, he was brought out on Tower Hill to die, not so bravely as the Duke of Argyle had done in Edinburgh.

Then the King sent into Devonshire a fierce and cruel General named Kirke, who had lately acted as a wicked tyrant at Tangier. This man brought cart-loads of wounded men from Bridgewater to Taunton, where he hanged some of them without trial, with shameful barbarity, above a hundred being thus put to death during the week after the battle. The good and tender-hearted Bishop Ken did all he could to lighten the sufferings of the prisoners, although he had disapproved of their undertaking. But the King and his friends were only displeased with Kirke because he let off some of his richer prisoners without making them pay enough for getting their liberty.

Soon after that, James sent to these western counties a Judge named Jeffreys—a monster of cruelty and wickedness—who seemed to take delight in condemning people to be beheaded or burned alive. One of the first things he did was to sentence to the last cruel death an esteemed and kind-hearted old lady, the widow of one of Cromwell's officers, who lived in a remote manor-house near Winchester. Every one loved Dame Alicia Lisle for her goodness, and when a minister she knew (who had been turned out of his living) asked for shelter in her house, she did not refuse it, not knowing that he had joined the army of Monmouth. He brought with him a friend who was a lawyer, but had been fighting at Sedgemoor. She kindly allowed the minister to hide himself in her malt-house, while the other hid himself in a cellar or chimney. They were found and taken, and for this act of mercy that wretched Judge condemned Dame Alicia to death, notwithstanding her statement that she knew nothing of their connexion with the rebellion, but supposed that the minister was hunted for field-preaching. The Judge was very angry with the jury for hesitating about their verdict, declaring that if she were his own mother he would condemn her. The clergy of Winchester begged for her life, and so did General Feversham, who won the battle, and several great ladies; but all the mercy that the King would grant was that she should be beheaded, instead of being burned alive! The cruel deed was carried out in the market-place of Winchester, where Dame Alicia met death with a serenity very different from the terror of the poor Duke of Monmouth.

This was only the beginning of the "Bloody Circuit,"

as it is still called, during which Jeffreys sentenced to death about three hundred poor misguided men, who had thought they were fighting for freedom and their religion. About eight hundred more were sent as slaves to the West Indies, many of whom died on the voyage, or from the unwholesome climate, while the rest dragged out miserable lives of toil and hardship. The Queen asked that a hundred of these prisoners might be given to her, but it was not in order to set them free, and the profit she made out of those who lived through the voyage was about a thousand guineas (or five thousand dollars). The young girls of Taunton who had presented Monmouth with a banner were also tried as rebels and given to the Queen's maids of honour, so they might make all they could out of the money which their parents had to pay for their lives. And the widows and orphans of the men who were hanged were robbed of all that they had, and left completely destitute.

When Jeffreys had finished all these cruel proceedings in the West, he came back to London, where he was thanked and praised by the King, and made Lord Chancellor. Then more cruel things were done there. Every one who could possibly be suspected of anything was brought to trial, and by some means condemned. A good and charitable woman named Elizabeth Gaunt, who used to visit the poor prisoners in the gaols, was burned to death at Tyburn, for having, some time before, helped a suspected man to escape to Holland, and a poor barber who had sheltered the same man after Sedgemoor was hanged for his kindness.

All this time, quiet Christian people were being put in prison for worshipping according to their own

beliefs, instead of the rules of the Established Church. They could not even hold a prayer-meeting in a gravel-pit, without risk of their lives ! Baxter was in prison, and John Howe, another great preacher, left the country. Many others escaped to the colony over sea—now called New England, and a large part of the eastern coast of North America was peopled with emigrants from Great Britain—those to the north calling themselves New Englanders and those to the south calling themselves Virginians. About ten years before this time, a gentleman named William Penn, the son of an admiral greatly esteemed by both Charles II and his brother, had become a Quaker, and, like others who would not attend the Established Church, was kept a good while in prison. King Charles happened to have owed Penn's father a large sum of money, and Penn asked that instead of the money due to him, the King should give him a province in America, between New England and Virginia, to which he might take many others who were persecuted for their belief, as he himself had been. After some opposition on account of his being a Quaker, he received a large grant of fine land, which he called Sylvania, on account of its forests. As the King wished Penn to add his own name, it became Pennsylvania—the beautiful State now so called.

The first thing that Penn settled when he laid out his colony, was—that every one who should live there should have entire freedom to worship according to their conscience, as Lord Baltimore had settled in Maryland, and as New Jersey had already provided. The next thing was to make the native Indians understand that he and his friends wished to live in peace

and friendship with them and serve them to the utmost of their power, and that "all was to be openness, truth and good-will." In this and other ways, this colony was much more free than New England, and it very soon contained seven thousand people, living busy and peaceful lives in their new home, neither oppressed nor oppressing others. For though the wicked African slave trade was still carried on by Englishmen as well as others, and there were already slaves in these new colonies, the negro as well as the Indian was protected by the laws from injustice and cruelty, and made as happy as was possible in a strange land.

About the time of the "Bloody Circuit," Penn was in England on a visit, and as he was in favour with King James, he seems to have tried to prevent some of the cruel and unjust things that James was doing; though he was too desirous to please the King and keep the peace on any terms, to do anything to offend him. But as any course of evil-doing makes people more set on doing it, James, after all the bloodshed and cruelty that had been done in his name, became more merciless than ever in forcing his subjects to yield to his tyrannical will, in reckless defiance of the laws of the kingdom. As he now wished to place all the power in the hands of Roman Catholics, he determined to take upon himself to set aside the "Test Act,"—passed in his brother's reign to prevent this—requiring that all employed by the State must obey its laws and those of the Established Church. James thought that all the people who had been oppressed for not belonging to that Church would for their own sakes willingly agree to have this "Test Act" set aside. But he was mistaken, for they cared more for the

good of the country than for their own interest ; and they knew that if the King were free to put Roman Catholics in high office, he would have no Protestants there. And they remembered how England had suffered from this cause in former days.

So all kinds of people united in resisting this, and the King seemed to grow more and more stupidly tyrannical in trying to force it on the nation. He openly defied the laws of England, by putting men of his own Church into high places in the great Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, as well as in the State and the Army, and turning out all who ventured to oppose this. Then as he wanted to get a Parliament that would abolish the " Test Act," he tried to make the nobles who were governors of the counties compel every one who wished to be elected to promise to do this ; and when they refused, he turned them out of office. But at last he made one great mistake which largely helped to bring his tyrannical reign to a sudden end.

The bishops and clergy of the Church of England had been accustomed to teach the people that the King must always be obeyed, no matter what he might command, which was, of course, to set their duty to the King above their duty to God. James thought that those who believed this would never dare to disobey him, and he sent his commands to the bishops to order their clergy, all over England, to read, on a certain Sunday, his declaration that he himself set aside the " Test Act," ordained by Parliament, and held by the bishops, as well as other people, as a law of the land. Now they did not believe that the King had the right to do this against the will of the people, and nearly all agreed that they could not ask the clergy to read what

they believed to be wrong. But as they greatly disliked to seem disloyal to the King, the Archbishop of Canterbury and six other bishops drew up a very mild and respectful petition, which they presented to him, asking him to excuse them from doing what was contrary to their consciences. This made James so angry that he called their humble petition a "Standard of Rebellion," and ordered them to obey his order at once. But the Seven Bishops still refused to yield to what they thought wrong, so that on the appointed Sunday the King's Declaration was read in only a very few churches throughout England.

Then the King turned the bishops out of their charges, and sent them to the Tower, to be tried for treason. As they were taken by water to that dreary place, crowds of boats covered the river, and a multitude of people thronged the shore—some even plunging into the muddy water—all crying out, "God bless your Lordships," and asking for their blessing. When they entered the Tower by what is called the "Traitors' Gate," the guards and soldiers also begged for their blessing. And even the Puritans, who did not believe in bishops, and had no reason to love the "Test Act," praised their courage and said they were in the right.

Contrary to all advice, the King insisted on having them tried before the Court of King's Bench, since the "Habeas Corpus" law would not let him condemn them untried. When the day of trial came, Westminster Hall was crowded with people—lords and commoners—nearly all of them sympathising with the bishops. The King had no very good lawyers on his side, for he had turned out his best law-officers. Those

he had did their best to have the bishops convicted. But their defenders—particularly a clever young lawyer named John Somers—showed clearly that their respectful petition contained nothing but what, by the laws of England, any subject might present to any king. When the case had been fully argued, the jury were locked up all night, without food or water. All were soon ready to declare the bishops not guilty, except one—the King's brewer—who did not like to displease him, and who thought that, being big and strong, he could tire out the rest. But a gentleman named Austin, who was still bigger and stronger, declared that, rather than find the Bishops guilty, he would stay there till he was no bigger than a pipe-stem !

On the morning of June 30, 1689, the jury came into court, and gave in their verdict of "Not guilty." Lord Halifax, the wisest and most eloquent of the statesmen of the time, instantly sprang up and waved his hat, and ten thousand people in the great Hall shouted and cheered with all their might, while those in the street huzzaed back, and the Thames boatmen cheered too, and horsemen galloped off to carry the good news far into the country ; for there were neither railways nor telegraphs then. And that night London was lighted up, and bonfires blazed along the streets, and many wept for joy at the victory for the Church and the freedom of England.

King James was out on Hounslow Heath, reviewing his army, when he heard the news, and as he was leaving it to return home, he heard a shout from his soldiers and asked what it meant. " Nothing—only the soldiers are glad that the bishops are acquitted," was the reply.

“ Call you that nothing—so much the worse for them ! ” replied the King.

But it was “ so much the worse ” for the King himself ; for not only the people at large, but even the soldiers on whom he most depended were weary of his tyranny. And that thirtieth day of June was a great turning-point in British history for more reasons than the acquittal of the bishops. For on that same day, a number of the wise men of the kingdom sent to Holland an urgent invitation to William, Prince of Orange, to come over to England with an army, to free them from bondage and oppression. A little son had just been born to King James, and all felt that the nation could not endure another reign like that of James, as that of his son was likely to be. And in asking William to come to the rescue, they promised that they, with great numbers of the people, would rise to support his cause.

Just at that time, however, William and the Dutch were afraid that Louis XIV of France was going to attack Holland, and they could not spare their Prince or their soldiers. But—instead of attacking Holland,—the French King suddenly made war on Germany. And then William at once collected his ships, and mustered his soldiers for England. It seemed to be something like the coming of William the Conqueror, six centuries before, to conquer England. But instead of a bloody and selfish conquest, this was to be a peaceful deliverance from tyranny, which has made the government of Britain a free and settled one ever since.

It was the famous “ Fifth of November ” when William, after being saved, by a change of wind, from an encounter with the British fleet, landed at Torbay

on the beautiful coast of Devonshire, where the people crowded to give him a joyful welcome; though the leading nobles who were to assist him were away in the North, collecting their forces, and could not, therefore, join him at once. He marched on to the city of Exeter and entered it at the head of his army, amid the joyful shouts of the people, who gazed with delight at their noble deliverer, mounted on his white charger, while above waved his white flag, on which they could read the words, in large letters:—"I will maintain the liberties of England, and the Protestant religion." Most of his soldiers were English or Dutch—some were Swedes or Germans, but all came to uphold law and liberty—not to plunder or destroy. So strict was the order kept, that nothing was taken from any one by violence or without payment, which was very different from what these people had formerly experienced from their own British troops.

When King James found out that William was about to come to England with his army, he began to see how foolishly he had acted. In great alarm, he asked the advice of some of his wise men and the bishops whom he had imprisoned, who counselled him to undo the unjust things he had done, and to call a Parliament at once. He tried to set right some of the worst wrongs he had done, but he would *not* have a free Parliament, and as he soon found out that there were very few about him whom he could trust, he grew more obstinate and sullen. He mustered forty thousand troops to oppose William, but he could not trust even his officers, and when he found himself deserted by his best General, Churchill (whom we shall know better as Marlborough) and that his daughter,

the Princess Anne, had gone to join the opposite side, he gave way to despair. William had marched on to Oxford and then to Salisbury, and James sent three of his friends to Hungerford, in that neighbourhood, professing willingness to treat with him. But in his heart he had determined to yield in nothing, but to escape to France or Ireland, from whence he might be able to bring an army to England, and regain his lost power.

First, however, he sent away his beautiful Queen, Mary of Modena, with the baby Prince of Wales, who had to be taken, at night, in an open boat to a place where she had to stand in the rain, with her baby in her arms, until a coach could be found to take her to a ship, on which she secretly embarked ; for the English people would never have allowed their King's only son to be given into the keeping of the King of France.

As soon as he knew that they were safely out of England, he prepared for his own flight, by tearing up the writs for the summons of Parliament. He slipped quietly away from Whitehall in the dead of night, carrying with him the Great Seal, the token of government, which he dropped into the Thames, as he drove across it to seek a ship at Sheerness to take him to France. But there he was stopped, insulted, roughly handled, and plundered by a mob of ignorant fishermen, who took him for a Jesuit, and kept him a prisoner, till a troop of Life Guards was sent down to release him.

No one in England wished to prevent his departure, as his presence in England would have been only a continued source of trouble. William was now at Windsor, but he refused to come to London with his troops, while James was there. Yet he had no desire to

harm him, and instead of sending him to prison after the old fashion, he gave him permission to live in the palace of Rochester, which he himself chose, because it was near the sea. From there he easily found his way, one night, to a ship which took him to France. Louis XIV received him there, as he had received the Queen, with great honour and respect, and gave them the fine old palace of St. Germain, near Paris, to live in. It had a large park, and was richly furnished with everything a king and queen could require. But, as we shall see, James was not satisfied with getting off so much better than he deserved, but went on for years trying to get his kingdom back, so that he might tyrannize over it again.

CHAPTER XXXVII

KILLIECRANKIE, LONDONDERRY, AND THE BATTLE OF THE BOYNE

1688-1690

THE great body of the English people heartily rejoiced to hear of the departure of James, though there were not a few who had good reason to fear being punished for their evil deeds. One of these was the cruel Judge Jeffreys, who was in danger of being torn to pieces during the rioting that took place in London when the first sudden flight of James had left the government in confusion; and he was thankful for being sent to the safe-keeping of the Tower, where he soon after died of a painful disease. But though the mission of William had been wonderfully successful, as well as peaceful, there were many things to be set right before the nation could settle down into a new order.

First, it had to be decided who should reign in the place of James. When Prince William arrived in England, he told the people that he had come to maintain their laws and liberties, but he did *not* claim the crown, for he wisely said that Parliament must settle *that*. As there was then no ruler to call a Parliament, the Lords who were in London and the old members of the

House of Commons met with the magistrates to consult together. There were different opinions, for some wished that the Prince of Orange should be made King, because he was so good and brave a man, as well as a grandson of Charles I. Others thought that Mary, as the eldest daughter of James, should be made Queen, while her husband should be Regent. But Mary was too loving and devoted a wife to agree to reign apart from her husband, the deliverer of England. So it was finally settled that William and Mary should reign together as King and Queen, as long as they lived, and that the Princess Anne should, after them, be the next heir to the Crown.

Then John Somers, the clever young lawyer who had defended the bishops, drew up a "Declaration of Rights," which was as important at this time as the "Great Charter" and "Petition of Rights" had been in former times. For it set forth the old rights and liberties of Englishmen, and declared that the Lords and Commons had chosen William and Mary for King and Queen, trusting that they would uphold these and the Protestant religion. On February thirteenth, 1689, there was a grand ceremony in the splendid banqueting-hall at the palace of Whitehall, when the Prince and Princess, in robes of State, met the Lords and Commons, and the address of the Parliament was read by the Clerk of the House of Lords, after which Lord Halifax, in the name of the nation, asked the Prince and Princess to accept the crown. William accepted it for himself and his wife, assuring the Parliament that it would be his desire to promote the welfare of the kingdom in accordance with its laws and the advice of the Parliament, which he would trust rather

than his own. Such promises had often been made before, but had seldom been so well fulfilled as they were by William and Mary.

The new King and Queen were then duly proclaimed in London—a grand procession marching for this purpose through streets lined with troops, amid ringing of bells and blowing of trumpets. At night the city was gaily lighted up, and multitudes of courtiers thronged the great rooms of Whitehall, to pay their respects to their Majesties, admiring the King's firm and manly bearing, and the grace and charm of the fair Queen, whose sweet and lively manner soon made her a greater favourite with the people than her grave and silent husband. But William had many anxieties and cares on his mind, and not only for England; for he had been all his life fighting for the freedom of Europe, still in great peril from France. And being much attached to his native land, he never became quite an Englishman, though he proved himself one of the best and wisest rulers that Britain has ever had.

He was far from strong, however, and the fogs of London did not agree with his delicate lungs. He could not live at Whitehall, and determined to make his chief residence at Hampton Court, outside London, which Wolsey had built and presented to Henry VIII, though it had long been deserted. William greatly enlarged and beautified it with most spacious courts and halls, while its charming walks and gardens bear evidence of his love of Nature and taste for gardening. In April the King and Queen were crowned with all pomp and splendour at Westminster Abbey, with more bonfires, fireworks and rejoicings. And then

William had to settle down to the hard work before him.

It was indeed no easy task to straighten its tangled affairs. The country was now divided between the Whigs and the Tories, and many of the latter even thought that James was still their lawful King, while some of the clergy gave up their charges rather than promise to obey King William. Then many Whigs were eager for the punishment of all who had supported James in his injustice. But William was too great and good a man to allow revengeful acts, for he wished all his people to live at peace with each other and forget old grudges. Therefore, though it disappointed many, the Parliament proclaimed an "Act of Grace," by which all past offences were pardoned, except some of the worst, which had to be punished for the good of the kingdom. And though James still persisted in trying to stir up plots against King William, they were happily discovered in time, and justly dealt with.

Scotland was more difficult to pacify than England, after all the stormy times through which it had passed. When the flight of King James left it without a settled government, there were riots there also, and the people rose up against the clergy who had been set over them against their will, and drove them away from their parishes, as their own ministers had been driven away before. As there was no real Parliament there, King William appointed a number of the leaders to meet together in the Parliament House in Edinburgh, to restore peace and order. The Castle was still held for James by the Duke of Gordon, but the Parliament was protected by a fleet with three Scottish regiments on board, that had been serving in

Holland. The great body of the Scottish people willingly chose William and Mary for King and Queen, as the English had done, but Claverhouse, now Earl of Dundee, with a number of the Highland chiefs, still clung to James, of their old royal Stuart race. It was finally agreed by the "Convention" that William and Mary should be proclaimed King and Queen of Scotland and an address, very like the English one, was prepared, stating what the people held as the rights of their country; and specially claiming that of maintaining their established Presbyterian Church.

William desired to be fair and just to all; and as he had agreed, by the general desire of the English people, that the Established Church of England should keep its bishops, so he now agreed to the Scottish people's desire that *their* Established Church should continue to be without bishops. But when Argyle and two other leaders came to London to read the address and offer the crown, he told them that he would lay himself under no obligation to become a persecutor—fearing that as the Scottish people had been persecuted in the past, they might now try to persecute others. He told the leaders, also, that he never could believe in violence advancing religion, and that he would not allow any party in his kingdom to persecute any other. When this was settled, William and Mary became King and Queen of Scotland and thus of the whole of Great Britain.

Notwithstanding all this, however, Dundee and his friends would own no king but James, being for this reason called Jacobites—from the word "*Jacobus*," the Latin form of *James*. For a time Dundee remained at his country house, near Macbeth's old

castle. But when a messenger was caught carrying letters to him from James, filled with desire for revenge on all who had opposed him, Dundee thought it best to escape to the Highlands. There—like Montrose before him—he began to collect an army from the Highland clans. As many of the chiefs hated the name of the old Argyle, and as his son was on the side of William and Mary, several of them promised at once to join Dundee with their clansmen, at Lochaber. Again the Fiery Cross was sent round through the hills and glens, and the Macdonalds and Macleans and Camerons came trooping in their tartans to the meeting-place, knowing and caring little save that their Chief, whom they trusted, had called them to fight against another whom they hated.

William and his Government sent an agent to try to explain to the Highland chiefs that they would be well and justly treated under his rule, but unhappily the person sent to do this was one of the hated Campbells, so that no good came of it. And as they were determined to fight, Mackay, a brave Lowland general, was sent to put down the rebellion. For some months, however, Mackay could make no headway against these wild warriors, who could not be kept in order like modern soldiers, but went about plundering the farms and burning the houses of peaceable people, till even Dundee declared that he would rather carry a musket in a respectable regiment than be the captain of such a gang of thieves! Indeed he could barely keep his reckless troops together, and was only trying to hold out for a time, hoping to get better soldiers from Ireland. In July some three hundred wild Irish soldiers appeared, ill-armed and ill-trained, little

better than the Highlanders. However, with these and about three thousand Highlanders, Dundee set out for Blair Athol to keep the King's troops from getting possession of the old Castle of Blair. This was a strong fortress and was held by the Jacobite steward of the old Marquis of Athol, who had been trying to please both sides, against his son and heir, Lord Murray, who demanded its surrender. But when his small force dwindled down to three or four hundred men he sent word to the brave Mackay, General of the King's forces, who at once moved forward with the Scottish regiments from Holland, and an English one known by the name of Hastings. The great chiefs of the Macdonald and Cameron clans, Glengarry and Lochiel, were eager to fight this Lowland army on the spot, and Dundee, though he thought it a great risk for troops so untrained as theirs, willingly agreed that they knew their own men best.

Five miles from Blair Castle is the rugged rocky pass of Killiecrankie, through which the mountain stream of the Garry dashes down its stony bed, between steep and wooded crags. The Lowland army had to force its way laboriously up this pass, where even the foot-soldiers could climb only two or three abreast, while the twelve hundred baggage-horses could mount only one at a time. However, they made their way up, at last, and stopped to rest in a little valley near the top.

But they had little time for either rest or refreshment, before the alarm was given that the enemy was close at hand ; and soon they could see the brow of a hill close by start to life with armed men swarming with blue bonnets and tartan plaids. Foremost came

the stalwart Glengarry, carrying the banner of "James the Seventh of Scotland"; and the stately and venerable Lochiel striding bare-footed at the head of his bare-footed men, having thrown away his shoes that he might fare just as they did. As the tired Lowland troops hastily set themselves in battle array, cheering as loudly as they were able, Lochiel exclaimed, "We shall do it now! That is not the cheer of men who are going to win!" He had himself gone through all the ranks of his clansmen, and had made each promise to conquer—or die. And so, in the words of the stirring old song—

. "Proudly they marched, for each Cameron knew
He might tread on the heather no more!"

And a hundred and twenty of them lay stretched on the heather when the fight was over. We can admire, now, the courage and loyalty with which they "followed their Chief to the field," in what they mistakenly believed was the right cause. But Lochiel did not know how dearly for them this victory was to be bought. He had said all he could to keep Dundee from putting himself in needless danger, for on the General he knew everything depended. But Dundee, whose courage might have excused every fault save cruelty, could not keep out of danger when his troops were in it.

The battle began with firing on both sides, from which the Highlanders suffered most. But towards sunset Dundee gave the signal to charge; and the Highlanders dropped their plaids and rushed with their deadly claymores (or broadswords) on the Lowland troops, while they were still trying to get their bayonets

ready to use. They could not stand before the fierce onset, and in two or three minutes the whole Lowland army was retreating in disorder before the wild Celtic warriors. It was all Mackay could do to rally a few hundred for an orderly retreat across a wild mountainous country, where he did not know his way. He was a good as well as a brave man, and afterwards declared that but for the unseen help of God, in which he trusted, he could not have held out as he did in such a strait. Many a flying soldier who sought shelter among the hills was plundered and killed by the savage clansmen who waylaid them in the mountain passes.

But the Highland forces had met with a fatal loss in the death of their brave and skilful leader "Bonnie Dundee," as he is fondly called in the familiar song. His troop of horsemen were not so brave as the Highlanders, and as he was trying to urge them on, he was struck down by a musket ball, thus meeting the fate he had formerly brought upon peaceful peasants. After his fall, he was just able to ask, "How goes the day?" When the answer came, "Well for King James!" he exclaimed, "If it is well for him, it matters the less for me!"—words that seem to show that he was meant for better things than the persecution of good men and women.

The Highlanders, however, followed up Mackay's retreating force as far as Dunkeld, with a skirmish on the way. A fine Scottish regiment, recently formed, very like the Ironsides of Cromwell, defended Dunkeld against the Highlanders, forcing them to retreat after a fierce struggle and much loss on both sides, including that of Cleland, the brave General in command. After that the Highland forces dispersed,

and Blair Castle surrendered to Mackay, who began—soon after—to build a line of forts through the Highlands to preserve peace and good order. But for a long time bitter feuds raged among the clans, and some of these caused a terrible deed, done, some months later, in a wild and lonely valley called Glencoe.

In this remote valley lived a small tribe of the Clan Macdonald, much hated by some other clans, especially the Clan Campbell, on account of their plundering raids ; and some of their bitter enemies, wishing to put an end to them altogether, contrived a very cruel and wicked plan for doing so. In order to pacify the country, the King's Government sent a large sum of money to be distributed among the chiefs, to make up for their losses through the war, and a promise was made in the King's name that every rebel chief who should promise to obey the King before January 1, 1690, should receive a full pardon for himself and all his clan. All who should refuse to do this were to be considered as "outlaws," no longer protected by the laws of the country.

Now MacIan, the Chief of Glencoe, was very proud and headstrong ; but when he saw that all the other Chiefs were submitting to King William, he felt that he must do the same. Much disliking to do so, however, he foolishly put it off till the last day of the old year. Then he set out to travel across the hills to Fort William, the nearest of the forts Mackay had built, where he expected to find an officer with authority to receive his submission. But to his dismay there was no such officer there. The poor old Chief, in great distress, not only for himself, but for all his people, begged, with tears, that his submission should

be received, but all that the Colonel there could do was to write a letter to the nearest magistrate at Inverary, explaining the circumstances. MacIan then made his way through the deep snow, over the mountains, not reaching Inverary till January 6. The Sheriff there was perplexed, because he had no orders for such a case, but, having heard all that the Chief had to say, he accepted his promise to obey the King, and sent on to Edinburgh an explanation of the circumstances which had caused the delay.

Unhappily, the two men who had most power in the matter were the Marquis of Breadalbane, one of the Campbells, who was acting for the King, and Sir John Dalrymple, called "the Master of Stair," who was Prime Minister of Scotland. When these men, who hated the Macdonalds, heard that MacIan had been so late with his submission, they were ready enough to plan and carry out a cruel massacre. They told the King that all the Chiefs except MacIan had submitted before the appointed day, and an order was written out for William to sign, that the "set of thieves" who lived at Glencoe should be "rooted out." The King was much occupied at the time with important matters affecting the good of all Europe, and in signing this order he never thought that his authority was to be used for a brutal crime.

MacIan's enemies were determined that the blow should be secret and sudden, and as they were afraid that ordinary soldiers might not be cruel enough to carry it out, they chose men belonging to the Campbell clan, because they hated the Macdonalds. When the red-coated soldiers, led by an officer called Campbell of Glenlyon, were seen coming over the snow-clad hills,

MacIan's eldest son, with twenty men, went to ask what their coming meant. They were told that the strangers came as friends, and wanted nothing but quarters. They were at once kindly received with a Highland welcome, taken into the little thatched houses, and received the best of what the clansmen had. For twelve days they were entertained by their hospitable hosts, and the two officers spent much time with the Chief and his family, professing friendship for them all.

Then suddenly—without any warning—they rose one morning at five o'clock, and began to kill every man they could get hold of, and even women and little children. The Chief was one of the first shot, but his two sons escaped. About thirty dead bodies soon lay on the blood-stained snow, while those who escaped wandered, cold and hungry, among the snowy mountains, till many of them died. The deserted little villages were then set on fire, and the herds and flocks and shaggy Highland ponies were driven away by the cruel soldiers as they left the misty glen, which now more than ever seemed to deserve the name of Glencoe, the "Vale of Weeping." Ever since then it has remained deserted and desolate—a silent witness to this cruel deed of the past.

Glencoe was so far away from London, and even from Edinburgh, that it was long before the circumstances of the massacre were fully known. Three years later, however, the King directed the Scottish Parliament to make an inquiry into the matter. When the facts were known the cruel Prime Minister was dismissed from office, and the officers who directed the cruel deed were declared guilty of murder, though no one seems to have been punished as such a crime

deserved, except as the consciences of some of the murderers are said to have punished them. This seems to be the only instance in which King William has been charged with injustice, which, however, arose from oversight, not strange in one who had so many cares on his mind, and had to trust so much to others.

We have now to go back some months to the story of Ireland, which James was still determined to keep for himself. When William was crowned King of England, he was called King of Ireland also, though Ireland had never seemed really like a part of the kingdom and was still looked upon as a sort of colony; because the English and Scottish settlers who owned themselves subjects of Britain were not a quarter of the people in the island, the rest being Celtic Irish very much like the Highlanders of Scotland. Henry VIII had tried to get the chiefs on his side, in order to bring their people to be loyal subjects. But after his death this was neglected, and as we have seen the "Irishry," as they were called, had sometimes tried to drive out the "Englishry" with great cruelty. When Cromwell ruled England, the severity with which he punished their conduct increased the hatred of the Irish; and the country had got into a very distracted state. For nearly all the old Irish lived in their own wild way, among the bogs and mountains, while the old English settlers, who also were Roman Catholics, lived in a part of the country called "The Pale." Then there were in the north many new English settlers who were Protestants, and had built forts and thriving towns. There was often fighting between these different kinds of people, and—during the reign of James—things had been growing worse. All the time when he was

oppressing people in England and Scotland, the English in Ireland were suffering much violence from the lawless robbers among the wild Irish. But when he fled from Britain it seemed as if there was no more order in the land, and the raiders overspread the country, robbing and killing the English settlers wherever they found an opportunity of doing so. Many of these left Ireland, while others made their homes little forts to keep off murderous attacks, and many more moved into towns where they could help each other to defend their families and their property.

One of these towns was Kenmare, near the beautiful lakes of Killarney, and another was Enniskillen, on an island in a lovely lake called Lough Erne. The people fortified both places as well as they were able; and brought in large stores of provisions and cattle to feed themselves and the country people who left their homes and came in, too, determined to defend themselves there as long as possible.

But the people who suffered longest and most bravely were the defenders of Londonderry on the river Foyle—the “beautiful Derry” so much loved by Columba. It had been burned down by an Irish chief five centuries before, and rebuilt and fortified with the help of the London merchants, after whom it was called *Londonderry*. It had earthen walls, but they were old and ruinous, and did not seem fit to resist an attack. So when the people heard that Tyrconnell was sending an Irish force to plunder the country, and take possession of the town for James, though the Governor had promised to serve King William, some grew faint-hearted, and ready to admit the first Irish troops, who had come across the river by the ferry to demand

entrance. But at that very moment, thirteen brave "prentice-boys" got hold of the keys and locked the gates, while another brave man stood on the wall, and called out "Bring a great gun this way!" when the troops retreated across the river and departed.

At that time it was believed that the Irish peasantry intended to rise to plunder and kill all the English settlers, or drive them out of Ireland, which they wished to keep quite separate from England; for they had kept up the memory of many wrongs done in the past; and the English settlers, being active and diligent, had more fruitful fields, cleaner towns, and were happier and more prosperous, because they knew better how to make the best of what they had. And as the ignorant Irish peasants were everywhere busy making weapons of war and sharpening their knives, while the English were forbidden to keep arms in their houses, hundreds of these towards the south took refuge in Enniskillen, while about thirty thousand were, before long, collected within the walls of Derry.

When James landed at Kinsale in March, and gradually made his way to Dublin, with a large train of French allies, among whom were some English nobles, the Irish people welcomed him joyfully, for they thought he would now make Ireland his kingdom alone. All along the roads, as he journeyed to Dublin, they were standing in long rows to welcome him, and spread their cloaks on the ground before him. In Dublin the streets were gaily decked, young girls offered him flowers, and the Lord Mayor, the Judge and the bishops met him in their robes of office. And when a Parliament met there by his order, he took his seat on the throne, wearing the crown of Ireland.

But first he led a large army to the north, hoping to take Londonderry, and then go on to invade England. King William had sent two fine regiments—as soon as he could spare them—to help in defending Derry. But the cowardly Governor, Lundy, persuaded their officers not to let them land, declaring that the town could never hold out against the army of James, which was almost in sight, and saying that he meant to surrender it and escape, leaving the people in the town to shift for themselves. This enraged the townspeople, and made them very watchful to have the gates carefully closed at night, and more determined to defend themselves. All sorts of men rushed to defend the walls, and when the army appeared, James was received with a shout of “No surrender!” and a shower of cannonballs. An officer of his staff was shot by his side, and he was glad to move out of danger, while the wretched Lundy hid himself from the people’s anger, until he could escape in the dress of a porter.

The people in Derry had now neither governor nor garrison; but there were there seven thousand brave high-spirited fighting men of English stock, determined not to yield. They appointed two governors from among themselves, one to direct the fighting, and one to look after the city. The men were divided into eight regiments, and each man knew his duty and his post. More cannon were mounted on the walls, and even on the tower of the Cathedral; and while they watched and fought bravely, week after week, they also went daily to offer prayers to God, and hear the comforting words of some one of the twenty-five preachers who were in the city. One of the bravest of these was an aged rector named George Walker, who had been

made one of the governors, and who by words and example cheered and encouraged his townsmen to hold out to the last. The town was cannonaded, and the roofs and upper storeys of many houses began to fall in, crushing those below, while fires were started that caused much havoc and alarm. Still the men fought on as bravely as ever, sometimes sallying forth to attack the enemy, while the women helped them by carrying water and ammunition, though the balls were lying thickly around them.

When James found that he could not carry out his plan of taking Derry and then invading England with Tyrconnell's army, he left the siege in charge of his generals, and went back to Dublin to make laws condemning most of the English settlers to death as "traitors." One of the generals was a cruel German named Rosen, and when he found it so hard to starve the besieged into surrender, he devised a wicked scheme for making them open the gates. He sent his soldiers through the country, to drag from their homes all the poor people he could find : old men and women and little children. These he set in front of the walls, with his army behind them, so that the people in the town might see them starving before their eyes, till they should feel obliged to open the gates to let them in. But the people of Derry knew that this would only bring destruction upon them all, and upon the people in Enniskillen, too, who would be attacked next. So they set up on their walls a high gallows, and sent word to the cruel Rosen that unless all these starving people were sent back at once to their homes, they would hang all the prisoners they themselves had taken from the besiegers. Rosen then sent back all

who were still alive, but many had already died of want or exposure. James was very angry when he heard of this barbarous deed, which he himself would not have allowed.

But it grew harder and harder to find food for the people within the walls. The whole town was searched, so that no stores could remain hidden. All the dogs and horses had to be killed for food, and the scanty provisions were doled out as sparingly as possible. King William and the English people had been greatly concerned for the brave defenders of Derry, and had been very angry with the conduct of the officer who had been sent with the two regiments, because he did not insist on landing them. As soon as possible they sent a fleet of ships laden with all sorts of provisions for the starving people. But contrary winds delayed it long on the way, and it was the middle of June before the sentinels on the roof of the Cathedral saw, with joy, a fleet of thirty vessels in the bay of Lough Foyle. But it was not easy for them to come up farther. For the Irish army had driven stakes into the bed of the river, and strung together large pieces of wood—thus making a boom to keep the ships at a distance. The Commander of the fleet was the same Kirke who had acted so cruelly after the Monmouth rebellion, and he now seemed too cowardly to take the ships up the river and break the boom. The people in the town were in greater straits than ever, and their stock of cannon-balls was almost gone. Fever, caused by hunger, also raged, and some of their best officers died of it, the military Governor among them. The people could count the ships, as they lay nine miles off, and a sailor who dived under the boom and swam to the city

brought the news that England had sent in them troops and provisions sufficient to supply all their needs. Still six weeks of weary watching passed, and then Kirke got orders from England to go on at once, and break the boom at any cost ! One of the merchant ships was called the *Mountjoy*, and its captain was a brave British seaman named Micaiah Browning, a native of Derry, who had brought a large cargo of provisions, and had been much vexed by the long delay. He volunteered to lead the way, along with Andrew Douglas, Master of the *Phoenix*, laden with Scottish oatmeal. Escorted by a small war ship, the vessels moved on with the turn of the tide. To the great joy of the people, the *Mountjoy* got safely across ; but at the same moment a shot from the enemy's batteries struck down her gallant captain, who thus met a hero's death before his native town, in the act of bringing it rescue from starvation. We may be sure that his townsmen honoured his memory !

It was almost dusk when the ships at last reached the quay. All the people of the place were there to welcome their deliverers. Every one helped to unload the barrels of meal and flour, the casks of beef and bacon, the great cheeses, the sacks of pease and biscuits. After a siege which had lasted a hundred and five days, it was with glad and grateful hearts that the famishing people enjoyed, that night, the first hearty meal they had eaten for months, while the city bells chimed out joyously against the dull roar of the enemy's guns.

Three days later the siege was raised. The camp was seen in flames during the short summer night ; and at dawn on the first of August, the rejoicing townspeople could see the long lines of soldiers and

flags disappearing along the banks of the Foyle. The walls of Derry have never seen fighting since then, though they have been carefully preserved, and the bastions have been turned into bowery gardens. In the old Cathedral are still seen the banners taken from the French, and one of the shells that crashed into the town in that terrible siege. And on the most exposed bastion may be seen a lofty pillar on which stands a statue of the brave Walker, holding a Bible in one hand, and with the other seeming to point to the distant bay where the English fleet lay so long before the famished town. Neither its sufferings nor its great deliverance have ever been forgotten ; for the Siege of Derry was the most famous and important ever known in the British Isles.

Three days after the besiegers left Derry, a sharp battle was fought at Newton Butler between the men of Enniskillen and a part of the Irish army, about double their own number, in which the gallant dash of the former put the latter to flight with great loss. Just at the time when the news of these defeats reached James in Dublin, there came also the tidings of the Highlanders' defeat at Dunkeld, and he knew that—for the present—his cause was lost in both countries.

King William had at first found it very difficult to spare troops for Ireland, but now he sent an army of ten thousand men, under his brave Huguenot General Schomberg—called, at that time, “ the first captain in Europe.” He took Carrickfergus in a week, and marched on towards Dublin, through a desolated country. But he found the greater portion of his army made up of untrained English recruits, while he met with troubles on every side from the shameful dis-

honesty of Englishmen who had supplied the troops with unwholesome food, unsuitable clothing, rotten tents, and useless muskets ! He could not attempt a pitched battle with the Irish army, which, indeed, did not venture on an attack. He maintained a fortified camp near Dundalk, till—under the soaking autumn rains—nearly half his army had been laid up by sickness, and many had died. At last the Irish army broke up and went into winter quarters ; and Schomberg, to save the rest of his troops, did the same.

In England there was much disappointment at so little result, for the people could not understand Schomberg's difficulties. King William—with all his anxieties for England, then threatened by a French fleet, felt it necessary to leave his other cares, and go to Ireland himself, to end the war. He left Queen Mary to fill his place in England, with some wise men to help her ; and she did it very wisely and well, though the French fleet did succeed in landing troops on the coast of Devonshire, through the treachery or cowardice of the English Admiral Herbert. But when the people of England heard that French troops were actually in their country, robbing and burning English homes in a small town called Teignmouth, Whigs and Tories and even Jacobites rushed, together, to defend their land, and drove the French in haste to their ships.

King William landed at Carrickfergus, joyfully welcomed at Belfast by the people of Ulster. When he had collected his Irish troops and mustered his army, it amounted to about thirty-six thousand men, from divers lands and speaking divers languages. For besides many brave English and Scottish soldiers, there were French Huguenots, and troops from Holland

Denmark and other Protestant countries of Europe, come to help what they all believed was the cause of right and freedom. James also had much strengthened his Irish army with well-trained French troops, but he retreated southward as William advanced.

At last—early on a July morning—a year after the Siege of Derry, William came in sight of James and his army ranged on the opposite shore of the winding Boyne. The whole army was not visible, for some little hills lay between ; but William, who was always bright and cheery when with his troops on the field, gaily remarked that—“weak or strong—he should soon know all about them.” As he was observing them, with some of his officers around him, on the river bank, he was struck by a ball from a hidden field-gun. It merely grazed his shoulder, and he said, cheerfully—“There is no harm done, but it came quite near enough !” And as soon as the wound was dressed, he rode about looking after the arrangement of his army along the river, and giving directions for the coming battle. One of his orders was that each man should put a green branch in his hat before crossing the river.

About dawn the next morning—the twelfth of July, 1690—the right wing of the army crossed by a bridge at some distance from the rest. As soon as they were fighting their way on the other side, the main body marched down to the river with drums beating, and plunged in. It looked as if a little grove of trees and muskets was passing over. As they went over a multitude of troops, before unseen, started into view. The Irish shouted defiance, but William’s men pushed on so gallantly that the Irish foot-soldiers gave way, and soon whole regiments were in confusion, throwing

away flags, arms and cloaks, and escaping to the hills. The cavalry, however, showed more fight, and as they were pressing the Huguenots hard, General Schomberg rushed over to encourage them, and was instantly killed, to the great sorrow of King William. Another brave man killed at the same time was George Walker, the hero of Londonderry, who had just been made a bishop. William—with his right arm still stiff from his wound—led his left wing through a fast-running tide, while the fight was still hot and doubtful, and made victory secure, though many of the French and Irish troops fought desperately, and one regiment had but thirty unwounded. William was foremost in the fray—injured as he was. He had several narrow escapes, and spent thirty-five out of forty hours on horseback.

As soon as James saw that the day was going against him, he turned his horse and rode fast towards Dublin, escorted by a body-guard under Sarsfield. Three days later, he left Ireland for ever and sailed for Brest. It was no wonder that an Irishman afterwards said to an English officer—"Change kings with us and we will fight you again!"

King William did not pursue the beaten army, nor would he permit any needless bloodshed. One of his soldiers who murdered three Irishmen after they asked quarter was hanged on the spot. The King entered Dublin in state; and—wearing his crown—he went to the Cathedral to return thanks for the victory, which had secured the peace, freedom and good government of Great Britain, and saved Ireland to the Empire. He then tried to take Limerick, but it was so gallantly defended by the Irish General Sarsfield, that the King was obliged to raise the siege and soon after had to return

to England, to look after the war which was going on in Flanders and still threatening the liberties of Europe.

In the meantime a false report of the death of King William had reached Paris, to the great joy of the French King and his Court. In London there had been much anxiety on his account, and Queen Mary had been greatly distressed, fearing lest in the battle that she knew must be fought, either her husband or her father might be killed. She had had many cares on her mind, especially on account of the treachery that had allowed the French to make a landing in England, and her strength had almost given way, when the news came that the battle had been fought and won, and that the King and her father were both safe. And the Parliament and all London rejoiced with her.

About three weeks after the battle of the Boyne, Sarsfield made a treaty with the English General Churchill, agreeing to surrender Ireland to English rule, on the promise that an Irish Parliament should be summoned, and that the Irish Roman Catholics should be free from interference with their religious worship. Ten thousand of the Irish troops, however, chose to follow their General to serve the King of France, rather than remain under King William in Ireland—a choice that many afterwards had much reason to regret. Most of them left wives and children behind them, and would have been glad to return to their own land, if they could have done so. But—owing to many troubles and difficulties that still had to be settled in Britain, as well as to the long wars in Europe—it was many years before Ireland received her rightful share of the freedom and good government won for Britain by the Battle of the Boyne.

CHAPTER XXXVIII

MARLBOROUGH AND QUEEN ANNE

1690-1714

AFTER the Rebellion in Ireland had been completely subdued, King William had still much fighting to do abroad, in order to prevent Louis XIV of France from gaining the mastery in Europe, and perhaps oppressing and ruining Holland and England, as he had lately desolated some of the finest provinces of Germany.

After William had reigned about a year, he set out, in the middle of January, to attend a grand meeting at the Hague, to which twenty of the Powers of Europe sent either their princes or ambassadors, all united against the French King, to protect the liberties of Europe. And of this great "Alliance" William was the head and chief. The King was so eager to see again his native Holland, and so tired of the long voyage, that, when the coast was near, he insisted on trying to land in an open boat which had to struggle all night with ice and breakers and came near being wrecked. Thousands of the Dutch people crowded to welcome him back, and gave him a splendid reception at the Hague, which was filled with princes and rulers come together to consult with him for the good of Europe.

In this great meeting it was decided that an army of more than two hundred thousand men should very soon be ready to fight against France ; and another thing that William now settled, through his influence with the Duke of Savoy, was that the poor Waldensian mountaineers, who had been so cruelly persecuted in the time of Cromwell and after his death, should—like the Dutch and English—now be free to enjoy their own worship in peace.

One of the British officers who served William at this time, both in Ireland and in Flanders, was a young man named John Churchill, who was to take a great part both in this reign and the next. He had been a favourite with James, who had trusted him with the command of the English army, but when Churchill saw that the English people would no longer obey King James, he at once deserted him and offered his services to King William. He was very handsome, graceful and clever, with manners so charming that he made most people like him. But he was never good or true, and he was so selfish and so fond of money that he was always thinking of riches rather than of doing what was right ; and this led him into many false and wicked ways, which prevent our regarding him as a great man.

He was, however, a great general, as well as a brave soldier, and at William's coronation was made Earl of Marlborough for the services he had done to England. He married a young lady who was the intimate friend of the Princess Anne, and therefore the Princess liked to keep Marlborough and his wife always near her, and it was one of the good things about Marlborough, that he was always devoted to his wife, who seemed to be the

only person whom he loved better than power and riches.

King William soon knew that Marlborough was not a true man, and that he had, for selfish ends, deserted his first master ; but as he was one of the best generals he had, he felt obliged to give him a high command in the army in Flanders. But Marlborough's ambition was not satisfied with this, and as he knew that the Jacobites were still plotting to bring James back, he began to think that if he could help them to drive away King William and then could manage to get the Princess Anne put in his place, he might become almost like a king himself, and be more powerful and wealthy than any one else in the kingdom.

So he got some of his friends to tell King James that he was very sorry for having deserted him, and very anxious to bring him back. Admiral Russell and some other Jacobites were so foolish as to join him in this plot, thinking it was really meant to bring James back ; while William trusted Marlborough so far, that he took him with him to Holland, not knowing that he had promised James to desert to him with the whole English army.

But as he was always promising, and never performing, the Jacobites began to see that Marlborough was likely to make fools of them all, and one of them at last informed William's good Dutch friend Bentinck, Duke of Portland, who had come with him from Holland. Marlborough was soon told that the King had no more need of his services, and forbade him to come into his presence again. The honours and rewards he had prized so much were taken from him, and he fared better than most traitors had done, in being

only for a time imprisoned in the Tower. The Princess Anne was greatly vexed by the disgrace of her friends, and since Lady Marlborough had to leave the Court she also left it, and went to live at Sion House, which had been the home of Lady Jane Grey.

A year or two later, Marlborough was guilty of another treachery, in warning the French King of an English attack about to be made on the harbour of Brest, thus causing the death of a brave general who was struck by a shot from a battery supposed to be deserted. Notwithstanding this, he thought the King would have to employ him, now that he had no very skilful general left, and was bold enough to come to him afterwards, pretending to be his friend, and offering his services, which William sternly declined. King William had a hard summer in Belgium fighting the French, while Queen Mary with her councillors governed England in his place. He did not know, at the time he left Britain, that the French King was collecting a great army to come over in eighty ships, to invade England and set James on the throne. But both were much disappointed in their idea that the English fleet would again let his forces land on their coast, and even Admiral Russell, who was a Jacobite, declared that he would fight the French wherever he should meet them. And he and his fleet did meet them, not long after, in the bay of La Hogue, and fought the French ships so well that most of the ships intended to carry the army to England were put to flight, and many of them burned—among them the largest of all, then considered the finest vessel in the world. This was another great deliverance for England, and London rejoiced at the news, ringing its bells, flying its flags and burning its

candles and bonfires. But many poor seamen had been killed or wounded and maimed in doing this great service to the country, and Queen Mary was much distressed about the wounded, and sent fifty surgeons down to Portsmouth, to attend to them. There were not then any such hospitals as we now have everywhere, though the old hospitals of St. Thomas and St. Bartholomew were soon filled with the wounded. And Queen Mary publicly declared, in her own and her husband's name, that a grand palace which Charles II had begun to build at Greenwich, close to the Thames, should be finished and become a Home for British seamen who had been disabled for life in the service of their country.

But she did not live to see it finished, for the Christmas week of 1694 brought to King William the great sorrow of losing his gentle and beloved Queen, who died, very suddenly, of small-pox—then much more common and deadly than it is now. She had proved herself a good and noble Queen, and a great help to her husband, and she showed herself kind and thoughtful of others to the last, anxious to send away her ladies and attendants out of the danger of infection. She had become a great favourite with the English people, and her sad and stately funeral in Westminster Abbey was attended by the whole Parliament—Lords and Commons—who, with the whole nation, truly mourned for her loss. She was deeply mourned in Holland, also, and by many of the persecuted people of other countries, whom she had generously helped in their time of need. To the King the loss seemed more than he could bear, and for some weeks he was quite unable to attend to his royal duties. But he soon began to feel that he must

go on with the work God had given him to do, knowing that strength would be given for the task. And though it was then thought that he would soon die, he lived and reigned for eight years more, and all his undertakings were blessed with wonderful success.

Immediately after the death of Queen Mary, William set about making the unfinished palace at Greenwich into the great Hospital or Home for the disabled "Mariners of England," on which the good Queen had set her heart. The great architect Sir Christopher Wren, who was then building the new St. Paul's, planned and directed it; and it has been called "the most superb monument ever erected to the memory of any sovereign." All who go to see the noble Greenwich Hospital, by the Thames, with its domes and fine colonnades, should know that—as one of our historians has said—"It is a memorial of the virtues of the good Queen Mary, of the love and sorrow of William, and of the great victory" (and deliverance) "of La Hogue."

It was hard for the King to go on with his double duties to Europe and Britain without his good and capable Queen to govern at home in his place. But, leaving seven of his wise men to look after British affairs, he had to go, early in spring, to conduct the war still going on with Louis XIV. Under his leadership, the British and Dutch forces gained great success over the French, and took back a strong fortress, called Namur, which William had previously tried to keep out of their hands. Two years later, a treaty of peace was signed at a village in Holland, called Ryswick, by which the proud French King bound himself to give up some of the lands he had unjustly taken, and to do

nothing further to disturb the rule of King William.

The English people, who were now tired of war, heard of this treaty with great joy, and welcomed their King, on his return, with processions and music, ringing of bells and windows gay with bright ribands by day and with lights at night. Then there was a day of solemn thanksgiving to God, and the churches of London were crowded with multitudes of worshippers. The new Cathedral of St. Paul's, built in place of the one burned down in the Great Fire, was opened on that day and was crowded with Londoners, and the magistrates, in their robes of office, met to thank God for delivering the nation from cruel tyranny, for the prosperity of the kingdom, and the wise rule of King William.

But that rule was nearly at an end, for the King had now not long to live, and indeed it was wonderful that he had lived so long, for he had never been strong and well; and there had been several plots made by Jacobites in Britain and France to take his life, so that James might be made king with the help of France. And one of these had very nearly succeeded, but was discovered in much the same way that the "Gunpowder Plot" was found out, because one man wished to keep a friend out of trouble. When William told his Parliament of the discovery of the plot, he said that it was the Providence of God that prevented the success of the wicked scheme.

But soon after the death of the Queen—knowing that the Princess Anne must, after his own death, be the rightful Queen, William sent for her and her husband, Prince George of Denmark, to come to live at St. James' Palace. And he permitted Marlborough and his wife to live there also, in spite of their former conduct to

him and Queen Mary. For he knew that the Princess would need some strong, clever man to help her to rule wisely, and that there was no one likely to do this so well as Marlborough, who was both a brave general and an able statesman, and who would, for his own sake, wish to stand by her, as that would give him all the power he desired. William feared that there would be much fighting to do yet, though the Parliament at that time would not believe this, and vexed him much by insisting on making the army smaller than he thought safe, and by sending away the brave Dutch Guards, who had fought so well under him in many a battle.

In the beginning of the eighteenth century (1701) there came news from France which made the English people very angry. James II died at the palace of St. Germain, and before his death Louis XIV promised him that he would acknowledge his son as James III, King of Great Britain and Ireland, although he had solemnly bound himself to do nothing more against the rule of King William, or the rights of the British people. This, of course, pleased the Jacobites, but it made much trouble and caused much misery for years after.

The English people were now ready to go to war with France again, and as William was now too infirm to leave England, he had to send Marlborough to lead the warfare in Flanders. Soon after his departure William had a fall from his horse, which hastened his death in the following spring. He had been a fighter for freedom from his boyhood, and in spite of ailments which caused him much suffering, he had got through more hard work, and hard fighting, than most of the kings before him. He had well fulfilled his promise to "maintain the rights and liberties of England,"

though he could not help loving his native Holland best, and never became quite an Englishman. He said he would have liked to live a little longer, to see some of the good he hoped for Europe ; but he knew that God's will must be best, and before his death he showed his generous wisdom by advising Anne, on becoming Queen, to take Marlborough for her chief counsellor and general ; which she was most willing to do.

One of the many important things that happened in the reign of William III was the beginning of our daily and weekly newspapers, which, before this time, were unknown. The Government used to send out, from time to time, a sheet called the *Gazette* to tell the people the things that needed to be known by the nation ; and there were also small sheets, called news-letters, which went from London to the country, carrying some news of what was going on in town. But—in the troubled times through which England had been passing—it had been unlawful to print and sell any book or paper until it had been examined by a person appointed for that purpose, so that anything he objected to might be kept back. But it began to be seen that this was contrary to true freedom, and as soon as it was done away with by a free Parliament, newspapers started up everywhere, to give the public news without hindrance, so that all the people in the kingdom could know what was done and what was needed by the nation. And ever since then a “ free press ” has been a part of English liberty—not interfered with unless in the case of something wicked or harmful to any one, which there are special laws to punish.

Another thing to remember was the beginning of the “ National Debt,” and of the Bank of England, one

of the greatest and richest banks in the world. The "National Debt" began when Government had very heavy war-expenses to meet. A clever Scotchman named William Paterson proposed that the people who had money to spare should lend it to the Government, and should be paid "interest" every year for its use. This was found to work very well, for rich people were glad to lend the money where they knew it would be safe. The Bank of England was begun in order to receive these loans, and pay out the "interest" for their use. This "National Debt" has gone on increasing ever since, but as many people like to have their spare money in the Government's keeping, it is a sort of family affair, and, unlike most debts, helps the prosperity of the kingdom, instead of hurting it.

But there is a very sad story connected with another great plan of this same William Paterson, which turned out very unfortunately for him and many others. This was called the "Darien Scheme," to settle a colony of Scotch people in the southern part of North America, just where the Isthmus of Darien joins the two parts of the vast continent. He had been there for a short time, and had found it such a warm and delightful country that he thought that everything would grow there without any trouble, and that the colonists could trade with India and China on the other side of the Isthmus and could bring tea and coffee and precious stones to their settlement, and then carry them to Britain in their ships—thus bringing much riches to Scotland. But there were several reasons why this scheme could not succeed. One was—that the place, being very near the equator, had a hot and unhealthy climate, in which people accustomed to a

cold northern land like Scotland could not live long. And as the surrounding country belonged to Spain, the Spanish troops were sure to attack any British colony there. Scotland could not fight Spain alone, and the English people would not join in doing so, especially as they feared that the plan would interfere with the trade of the East India Companies, of which there were now two.

However, as many people in Scotland were greatly taken with the plan, William Paterson sailed for Darien in a large ship, with twelve hundred settlers for the colony, who took with them many useless things, for such a climate—among them about four thousand wigs, such as were then commonly worn in Britain.

They set to work at once to build little cabins for shelter, and a small fort where they could defend themselves if attacked. But they found it very hard work under the scorching tropic sun, and as it was impossible to get wholesome food, after their first supply was done, many of them caught the terrible fever of the country, and died of it, among them the wife of Paterson. Then as soon as the Spaniards found out that they were there, they sent ships with troops to fight the poor colonists, whose little fort was soon taken, Those who survived managed to escape to the West Indies, taking with them poor Paterson, who stuck to the spot as long as he could, though half dead with sickness and heart-break.

About a year after the first settlers left Scotland, thirteen hundred more followed them, expecting to find a flourishing colony. To their dismay they found the place silent and deserted, with nothing but the ruins of the little fort to be seen! None of the first

emigrants ever returned to Scotland, and the people there were angry because England had not sent troops to help them, thinking it was from jealousy of the trade the colonists had expected to secure. But the nation had too many more pressing affairs on its hands just then, without going to war with Spain about an enterprise that never had much chance of success.

The English people had, however, grown very selfish about such matters, and would not allow the Scotch to trade with them freely. Neither were they willing that, the Irish people should manufacture and sell woollen goods. For they wished to keep the wool trade for England alone, and also to prevent the fine cloth made in France from being brought into England. This caused a great deal of smuggling and lawlessness ; but it was long before England learned the lesson that free trade with all the world was to become the foundation stone of her national prosperity.

Five years after the death of King William, in 1707, all the old troubles between England and Scotland were settled by the complete union of the two countries into one kingdom. Cromwell, as we have seen, tried to secure this by bringing Scottish members into the British Parliament, but this did not last, because the Scottish people did not wish to give up their own separate Parliament, and the Jacobites among them were still planning to make the son of James, now called "the Pretender," the King of Scotland, after the death of Queen Anne, whose children all died in infancy.

But the great statesman Lord Somers, who had defended the Seven Bishops, succeeded in bringing about

this important Union, which has proved greatly for the advantage of both countries. The Scottish people had their own Church and their old laws secured to them, and sent members to the British Parliament, just as the British did ; while they could now freely trade with the whole of Britain and the British colonies. Queen Anne gave her assent to the Act of Union in the following wise words : “ I desire and expect from my subjects of both nations that from henceforth they act with all possible respect and kindness to one another ; that so it may appear to all the world that they have hearts disposed to become one people.” And so the England of Edward I and the Scotland of Wallace and Bruce became happily united, and both were much happier and more prosperous in consequence. Scotland had always been a land of industry, as well as of poetry and romance, but now her farmers and traders became richer, her towns and cities larger, and her poets and great thinkers famous all over the world.

The war in Flanders, however, still went on, and Marlborough, as the General of Queen Anne's army, was still fighting the French. He was now the Duke of Marlborough, and he had taken up King William's work in Europe, and carried it on with as much skill and even more success than William himself, for it was said of him that he won every battle he fought and took every town he besieged. He was determined to break the dangerous designs of Louis, and Germany and Austria sent many troops to help him under the brave Prince Eugene.

In the summer of 1704 Marlborough and Prince Eugene fought one of the great battles of the world at a place called Blenheim, in Bavaria, near the river Danube. The French troops were ranged beside

a small stream, with marshy ground in front, to hinder the other army's approach. The British troops attacked them at one end of their line, and the Germans at the other; and the French fought so well that it seemed for a time as if they were going to win the battle. But Marlborough saw that the centre of the line was the weakest, and made a dash upon it, cutting the French army in two halves, after which he beat first one, and then the other. It was a terribly bloody battle, for of the fifty thousand French soldiers, twelve thousand were killed, and fourteen thousand taken prisoners. The English poet Southey has written a poem about this battle, to show how dreadful a thing war is. An old German peasant named Kaspar is telling his grandchildren about the battle, and some of the sad things it brought with it, and this is part of what he says:—

“ ‘My father lived in Blenheim town,
 Yon little stream hard by;
 They burned his dwelling to the ground,
 And he was forced to fly;
 So—with his wife and child—he fled,
 Nor had he where to rest his head.

“ ‘They say it was a shocking sight
 After the field was won;
 For many thousand bodies there
 Lay rotting in the sun,
 But things like that, you know, must be
 At every famous victory!

“ ‘Great praise the Duke of Marlbro’ won
 And our good Prince Eugene!’
 ‘Why! ’twas a very wicked thing!’
 Said little Wilhelmine.

‘Nay, nay, my little girl,’ quoth he,
‘It was a famous victory!’”

But though old Kaspar could not tell “what came of it at last,” this victory, dearly bought as it was, was a very useful one for England, as well as for the other countries of Europe which the French King wanted to enslave. Yet it was very sad that so many men had to lose their lives because of this man’s selfish love of power, and if the misery and desolation caused by famous victories were more realized, war would not occur so often. This victory made the very name of “Malbrouck” as the French called the great English General, a terror to even the little children, but he had to fight another battle, two years later, at a place called Ramilles, in Brabant, in which during an hour and a half, fifteen thousand of the French were slain. After this terrible defeat, Louis bent his pride to offer terms of peace, and gave up almost all that the Allies had been fighting for. Marlborough would have accepted these, but the Allies and the English Whigs insisted that Louis should also promise to compel his grandson to give up the crown of Spain, so that the kingdoms of France and Spain should never be ruled by one family. The French King would not agree to this, and so the war went on for three years more. And though France had suffered so terribly, Louis called on his poor half-starved soldiers to help him once more; and they fought with such desperate courage at a place called Malplaquet, that, though twelve thousand of them fell, they killed twice as many of the troops of Marlborough and the Allies.

This frightful slaughter, however, proved too much for the English people, who began to blame and even

ridicule Marlborough, though he had advised making peace three years before. The Whigs, who wished to continue the war, had to go out of power, and the Tories, who came in, would not listen any longer to the advice of their old friend Marlborough. Queen Anne, too, was no longer his friend. He was dismissed from his high command, and accused of having taken public money for his own use. The House of Commons found him guilty, and notwithstanding all his famous victories, he was obliged to escape from England in disgrace and take refuge in Flanders. But he had never been a good or honest man, and "the love of money" led him into much evil which has clouded his great name with deep dishonour.

He had no share in making the great Treaty of Utrecht in Holland, though it was the success he had wan that made it possible. By this treaty Louis agreed to give up all the lands and fortresses which he had unjustly taken. To Britain he gave up the strong posts of Minorca and Gibraltar, which gave her the command of the Mediterranean Sea, and undertook to pull down the forts at Dunkirk which used to shelter pirate ships that plundered British merchant vessels. What was still more important for England, he agreed to send away the young "Pretender" from France, and to recognize Anne as the rightful Queen of Great Britain, and also to agree to the choice that had been made of her successor.

As Queen Anne's children had died, and her health was failing, this was now a very urgent matter. The only Protestant heir to the crown was the granddaughter of James I, whose mother had been the unhappy Queen of Bohemia. She herself had married

the Duke of Brunswick, who had been made "Elector" (or Prince) of Hanover in Germany and was called the "Electress" Sophia. She and her son, the young Elector were now declared the next heirs to the British throne.

The Electress Sophia, however, died before Queen Anne, and the English did not very much like the idea of a German King. But it seemed the only way to save the nation from another civil war, for again the Jacobites began to plan to bring in the "Pretender." And when Queen Anne was suddenly struck down with apoplexy, the Whig and Tory leaders united in sending at once for the Elector of Hanover, who, shortly after, peacefully succeeded as George I to the throne of Great Britain and Ireland.

CHAPTER XXXIX

“BONNIE PRINCE CHARLIE” AND THE HIGHLANDERS

1712-1746

NOW that there was peace abroad, and so many troubles had been settled in Britain, it might have been expected that things would go smoothly at last, but there was very nearly a civil war on the death of Queen Anne. For when Marlborough had been driven away, Lord Bolingbroke, the Tory Minister of Queen Anne, appeared willing to favour the Jacobites, after all ; and the Whigs, who would not permit this, were preparing to resist any attempt to make “the Pretender” King, and were ready to call Marlborough to their aid. But before anything could be done on either side, Queen Anne was struck down with apoplexy. Then the Duke of Shrewsbury, though he was a Tory, sent at once for the great Whig Dukes of Argyle and Somerset, and their united power in the Council settled the question. Four regiments were summoned to London to prevent any disturbance, and as the Electress died shortly before Queen Anne, her son, the Elector of Hanover, was called to the throne as King George I.

It was unfortunate that the new King was a total

stranger to England and its people. At first he could not even talk English, and as only one of his Ministers—a clever man named Carteret—could speak German well, he had to talk with the others in the best Latin they could muster. He seemed much more of a foreigner than King William had done when he came to England; and as he knew that he had been chosen by the English people only because they would have none but a Protestant king, he was very willing to leave to his Ministers the government of the country, about which he knew so little.

He had one very clever and useful Minister, Sir Robert Walpole, who was not, like Marlborough, a great general, nor like Lord Somers, a great statesman. But, though he seemed only a bluff, good-natured English squire, and was not altogether a good man, he was an able and prudent leader, and knew, on the whole, what was best for England at that time. He managed to keep the country at peace for twenty years, during which it had a chance to become prosperous through its growing trade and manufactures; and some needed improvements were made in the laws, which made it a better country to live in. But he did not do all that was needed, for he did not remove the hardships still pressing on the people who did not belong to the Church of England. And other great evils continued to do much harm.

One of the greatest of these was that the members of the Commons, who had now so much power, were not ashamed to make bargains, for their own advantage, with people who wanted them to vote in a certain way; and they also used to buy votes from the people, in order to keep themselves in power. This is called

bribery, and is very wrong and dishonest, since men are sent to Parliament to seek the good of the country, not their own profit ; and a vote is a trust which no one should buy or sell, but use for the good of the whole people. One of Walpole's chief faults was that he was very fond of power, and wanted to have it all for himself. And as the clever Carteret, soon made Lord Granville, became a great favourite with the King, partly because he could speak German so well, Walpole became very jealous of him, and got him put out of his office.

The Jacobites, however, had not quite given up their hopes of making " the Pretender " King. You must remember that he was the brother of Queen Anne, who, when a little child, had been carried off by his mother to France, just before his father fled from his kingdom. He had lived since then at the Court of St. Germans, but, as we have seen, he had now to leave France. He had been crowned, at his father's death, King of both England and Scotland, and he believed himself their rightful Sovereign. Many of the English Jacobites still thought so, too, and as most of the Scottish Highlanders were still strongly attached to the old Stuart family, some of their chiefs were determined to put him back in the place of King George. So a plan was made to do this, and in 1715, three years after the death of Queen Anne, the Earl of Mar raised in the north of Scotland the standard of the " Chevalier," as " the Pretender " was called in France. Lord Kenmure headed another body of Jacobites in the south, while Argyle took command of the forces of the King.

The first was beaten at Preston in England, and

another battle was fought at Sheriffmuir in Scotland, for which the " Chevalier " arrived too late, and which both sides thought they had won. But when James at length arrived in Scotland, he was disappointed to find the Highland forces much reduced by death and desertion, while his Scottish friends were disappointed to find him weakly in health and slow in action, not like the brave and dashing Stuarts who used to reign in Scotland. He and the Earl of Mar soon went back to France, and the men who had come out to fight returned, discouraged, to their homes. Some of the gentlemen who led them managed to escape to France, but others were caught, and put to death as rebels. One of them, Lord Nithsdale, who was condemned to die, escaped from his prison the very night before he was to be executed, through the courage of his wife, who went to visit him, and succeeded in taking him out with her, disguised in a lady's cloak and hood. Some of the leaders who were pardoned lost their fine estates, on account of this rebellion, which brought nothing but sorrow and misery to Scotland. But most of the Highlanders still kept up their devotion to the Stuart House, and were to prove it in a still sadder way thirty years later.

During these thirty years, the " Chevalier " lived chiefly in the old city of Rome. He married a proud and handsome young Princess of the royal Polish House of Sobieski, and had two sons, of whom the elder was named Charles Edward, though he is better known as " Bonnie Prince Charlie." When he was born, guns were fired from the old Castle in Rome, and he was called by his friends " the Prince of Wales." He grew up a brave and gallant youth, loving outdoor

sports and fighting, and much more like the early Stuart kings than his father and grandfather. At fourteen he fought in Italy, under his uncle, and won great praise for his reckless daring. Having been taught to believe what was called the "Divine Right of Kings," he fully believed that his father was the rightful King of Britain, instead of George II, who had succeeded his own father, and who was but little liked by the English people. He had a great affection for Scotland, the land of his forefathers, and as he was often told that the people longed to be free from the rule of the House of Hanover, it was the dream of his life to go, some day, to Scotland, to win back the kingdom for his father's house.

In 1745, when Prince Charles had reached his twenty-fourth year, the time seemed favourable for making the attempt that had so long been planned. So he left his father and brother in Rome, and went secretly with his tutor to France, where he hoped that Louis XV would supply him with ships and troops to help him against the Government of George II, who had succeeded his father. He did get a fleet, laden with French soldiers, arms and ammunition; but as it was crossing the Channel, a storm wrecked some of the ships and drove the rest back. Then Louis would not try again, but sent the troops to fight in Flanders instead of Scotland. Prince Charles, deeply disappointed, would not give up his enterprise, for he believed that if he could only reach Scotland, the Highlanders and many of the English would be ready to help him to win the kingdom. So, after waiting some time and making many vain attempts to secure the active aid of the French King, he at length made the desperate

resolve to wait no longer, but to go to Scotland, even if he had to go alone—to gather the Highlanders round him, and make a brave fight for the British crown.

There were messengers going backwards and forwards all the time, between Charles and the Highland chiefs, some of whom told him that the Highlanders were ready to follow him, and that the English Jacobites would rise at once to join them, and, in general, promised much more than they could possibly perform. Others, who were truer friends, tried to make him understand the real state of things and begged him not to make so great a venture until he could be sure of a large French force at his back. But the Prince—having once made up his mind—would not be persuaded to give it up ; and indeed, through carelessness or treachery, he did not receive one of the most important warnings till after he had set out on his voyage.

He had secured a trading vessel, armed with guns, to carry him across the Channel, and a French privateer undertook to escort it. But during the voyage a British warship attacked the privateer, which had to return to France, carrying with it a large part of the arms and ammunition provided for the expedition. Prince Charles took with him seven friends, the chief of whom was the old Duke of Athol, and another was his old tutor. They now begged him to return to France to secure more assistance, but he was still determined to push on, and at last his small ship reached in safety the shores of the bleak and rocky Hebrides on the west coast of Scotland.

The Prince and his friends landed first on a little island called Friska, and the party spent their first night in a humble farmhouse beside a peat fire, while the rain

poured down on the thatched roof. But he was so glad to be in the land of his fathers, as he had so long desired, that he did not mind even the peat smoke, which sometimes drove him out into the storm to relieve his smarting eyes. On the next day, he sailed on to the main shore, and held counsel with some of the neighbouring chiefs, who came out to meet him on the ship. They were startled and alarmed at his arriving there, without troops or even officers, to command an expedition, and—feeling that the case seemed a desperate one—they all begged him, for the present, to return to France and await a more favourable opportunity. This was the advice of even the brave Lochiel, the grandson of the noble Sir Ewan Cameron,—the “Lochiel” of Killecrankie—who thought the plan a wild and foolhardy one, with which he was determined to have nothing to do. But when the Prince declared that, whether the chiefs followed him or not, he would, with his few followers, set up his father’s flag, and die if he could not conquer, the generous chief forgot his prudent resolve, and the terrible risks he ran, and declared that he and his clansmen would share the fate of his Prince, whatever it might be.

Lochiel’s example was followed by other chiefs, and on the nineteenth of August, 1745, there was a gathering of the clans at Glenfinnan, on the shore of a lonely lake lying between heather-clad hills. Before the close of the day, a little army of thirteen hundred Highlanders—all Camerons and Macdonalds—had collected there, and the shore of this remote spot had become a busy and lively camp. Great zeal was shown for the Prince’s cause, and more volunteers gathered about him from day to day.

Swords and muskets were given to those who had none, and all preparations were made for the great undertaking.

The English Government had been greatly surprised and alarmed at hearing that the Prince had landed in Scotland, and a reward of thirty thousand pounds—about a hundred and fifty thousand dollars—was at once offered for his capture, yet none of these poor Highlanders ever thought of so enriching themselves at the expense of betraying the Prince who had thrown himself upon their aid and trusted them with his fate and his fortunes.

An English General, Sir John Cope, who had fought in Flanders, had been sent with two thousand men to bar his way ; but, through some mistake, he missed his aim, and “ Prince Charlie ” led his men, unopposed, through the hills to Perth, and thence to Edinburgh. When the people of that city heard that this army of wild Highlanders was marching towards them, most of them were much alarmed, and closed the gates to keep them out, while they sent all the soldiers they could spare to try to drive them away. But these were unable to meet so large a force, and were chased back as soon as the first shots had been fired. Early the next morning, Lochiel, with five hundred of the Camerons, surprised the watch and forced the gates, through which the whole army poured in, with the Prince at their head. It was the first time that he had seen the old grey town and castle where his forefathers had ruled so long. And it was a proud day for him ; for many, who still loved the old Stuart race, crowded round him to welcome the handsome and gallant young Prince, looking like a Highlander himself, in his bright Stuart

tartan, with a white rose, the badge of his cause, fastened in his "blue-bonnet" (or Tam-o-Shanter). On the evening of his arrival, a grand ball was given in his honour at Holyrood Palace, to which came all the Jacobite lords and ladies, all wearing white roses or "cockades" on their rich dresses. It was a gay scene, one of the few very happy ones in poor "Prince Charlie's" life; and it must have seemed to him that his long-cherished dream was coming true.

On the next day at the Market Cross, the heralds of the city proclaimed his father King James VIII of Scotland, and Prince Charles Regent. And the Prince declared—then and afterwards—that he did not wish to interfere with the liberty of any of the people, and that no one should be compelled to worship in any way but that which they thought right. For he wished them to understand that neither he nor his father meant to be the sort of king his grandfather had been. In the meantime, Sir John Cope was approaching with his troops, and the Prince's army went to meet them at a place called Prestonpans, where a battle was fought, and where the fierce rush of the Highlanders, in less than half an hour, entirely dispersed the English troops, with great loss and slaughter. This pleased the Highlanders so much that a song was made about it—the music of which has, many times since, called out the Highland soldiers to fight for the British Empire.

Prince Charles found it very pleasant to stay in Edinburgh, where he had many friends, and where he collected many more troops, and perhaps he stayed there a little too long. But though he had now a force of five or six thousand men, he found it very hard to

persuade his Highland soldiers to cross the border into England. They would have much preferred that he should be content with gaining Scotland, and should keep it quite separate from England. If he could have been satisfied with this, he might have succeeded in establishing his father's rule over their old Scottish kingdom, at least for a time. But he fully believed that his father was the rightful king of England also, and he was determined to win it for him if he could.

As very few people from the Lowlands had joined him as yet, the English Jacobites showed little sign of doing so, and the prospects of success were not very bright. However, as his army loved him for his spirit and courage, as well as his race, he got them to follow him to the English town of Carlisle, of which they easily took possession. As soon as he had left Edinburgh, with his army, the soldiers who held the Castle for the British Government, broke out and took a cruel revenge on some of the wounded Highlanders, whom the Prince had not been able to take with him, though he had bargained with the town authorities for their safety.

Carlisle, also, had a strong castle, with an English garrison, but the Prince's brave General, Lord George Murray, besieged it and the castle so skilfully, that both soon surrendered to the Prince. Then the Prince and his Highlanders marched on through the boggy moors and the bleak hills of Cumberland, often through snow as well as mire, for it was now December, and the Prince shared bravely the toil and fatigue of his men. Unhindered, but unaided, even by the Lancashire Jacobites, they passed through Lancaster, Preston, Manchester, and at last entered Derby, where, at last, a regiment was raised to add to his army. Early in

December he marched into Derby at the head of his army, feeling now most hopeful of leading his forces successfully all the way to London, where the people were already alarmed by the news of his rapid approach. For the country had become so prosperous under Walpole, that the English did not wish for any change ; and even the English Jacobites had not so far shown any of the zeal for the Prince's cause which had been expected. The officers of Prince Charles thought this so serious a matter, that they took counsel together. and headed by his chief General, Lord George Murray, they told him that they thought the Scottish army had now ventured far enough, and that they must decline to follow him any farther south.

This was a great disappointment to the Prince, who was still expecting to receive help from his English friends, and as he believed his cause a just one, he felt sure it would yet win the day. It is possible that, if he had gone on, he might have actually taken possession of London for a time ; especially as offers of Jacobite assistance arrived too late—very soon after the army had begun its retreat. But the Scots leaders felt that as the desertion of many of their men had much weakened their forces, they could not venture, with only five thousand men, to risk a battle with the Duke of Cumberland—the second son of King George, at the head of twelve thousand. Besides this, General Wade's army was approaching from another quarter, and the King himself was mustering forces to protect London.

The Highlanders themselves were as unwilling to return as Charles himself. After their long and toilsome march, it was most galling to their Highland pride to turn back without even risking a battle with General

Wade, whom they thought they could easily defeat, and they were so angry with the English for not coming to their aid, that it was hard to restrain them from violence on the way. The Prince could hardly forgive his officers for forcing him to retreat, and now rode on by himself, silently brooding over this dashing of his brightest hopes. However he was as determined as ever not to give up, and as he still hoped that the French King would send him an armed force, he expected to return with a larger army to subdue England. Therefore, when he reached Carlisle, after a skirmish with a portion of Cumberland's cavalry, Charles resolved to leave his artillery and heavy baggage in the Castle there, with a garrison to hold it. This, as it turned out, was a great mistake, as it was impossible for them to hold the place against a large army, and the unfortunate soldiers were all sacrificed to the vengeance of the ruthless Duke.

Meantime Charles arrived safely with his army in the town of Glasgow, where he gave his tired Highlanders a week's rest, and made the citizens fit them out with the clothing they so much needed after their long march. There he appeared for the last time in kingly pomp and grandeur at a great review. A force of eight hundred men had now arrived from France, and the Prince's army grew larger as it approached the Highlands, so that by the time he reached Stirling, it had increased to more than eight thousand. The town of Stirling very soon surrendered to the Prince, but he lost both time and men in trying to take its strong castle.

Meantime the English army under General Hawley was marching to attack him, and met him at Falkirk,

where the famous William Wallace had once fought an army twice the size of his own. Here, as at Prestonpans, the fierce onset of the Highlanders speedily routed the English force, and drove it off in headlong flight, in the face of a storm of wind and rain. If the Highlanders could have followed up their victory by pursuit, they might have crushed the English force completely, but the darkness and the storm and the Highland eagerness for the spoils of war made the immediate pursuit impossible. Most of his officers, however, were in favour of going on at once to follow the English force to Edinburgh, and ensure their complete defeat. But the Prince was very anxious to take the castle of Stirling before he left the neighbourhood, and had, besides, caught a severe cold on the day of the battle, so that it was unsafe for him to expose himself to the wintry weather, which also interfered greatly with the siege of Stirling Castle.

Meantime the Duke of Cumberland had left London to resume command of the English army, and it seemed certain that another battle would have to be fought immediately. The Prince was eagerly planning to go forward to meet him, hoping for another victory which might secure the triumph of his cause, when he met instead with another great disappointment. Lord George Murray, Lochiel and the other chief officers, seeing that their army had become much weakened by sickness and the desertion of many men, told him that an immediate battle would now be too great a risk, and that it would be better to retreat at once to the Highlands, to take the forts there, and strengthen the army for a future contest. Prince Charles was very unwilling to order a retreat which, he thought, would show his

weakness, and give his enemies more confidence. But as all the chiefs had made up their minds, he could only give way with much regret.

Through the Highland hills, again, the Prince, with his men, made his way in the depth of winter, meeting with many adventures, resting sometimes at the castle of a friendly chief, and at one time ill from exposure. About the middle of March he and his army reached Inverness, now much larger than in the days of Montrose, for it had about three thousand citizens, most of them industrious artisans. Charles remained quietly there, while Lord George Murray and Lochiel made sallies into the western Highlands, with various success. His funds were now very low, and a large sum of money which some of his friends were bringing over from France, with stores and ammunition, was lost by the stranding of their vessel and their capture by a band of Highlanders fighting on the King's side. Sometimes his men had nothing better to eat than oatmeal porridge, and did not always have enough of that. And they were hardly in a fit state for good fighting; when Cumberland and his large army were at last close upon them, on the great grey moor of Culloden.

The Battle of Culloden was the last battle ever fought on British ground, and we may well hope the last that ever will be fought there. It was a fatal battle, not only for the Prince but for all the western Highlands, which it left open to the vengeance of the cruel Duke, who earned from the Scottish people the nickname of “ the Butcher.” Before the battle, he gave his troops orders to kill all the wounded, and take all the prisoners they could secure, and even to burn down any cottages in which poor wounded men might

find refuge ; and these orders were only too well carried out.

The battlefield was not favourable to the Highlanders' mode of fighting, as it was a great level plain, where the heavy guns of the enemy and their mounted troops had a great advantage. Both the Prince and the Highlanders were almost famished and worn out with a long night march, which they had made in the hope of surprising Cumberland's camp ; but, missing this chance, they had not long returned when the English army appeared close by on the moor. After being kept standing for nearly an hour, in a bitter wind, with driving sleet, under cannonade, in order that the English troops might attack first, they made a brave dash on the English lines, at first sweeping all before them. But many fell under the enemy's fire, and the bayonets of the second line proved too much for the Highland claymores (or short swords). The right wing, which attacked first, soon fled in confusion, and though the rest, with Lord George Murray and the Prince himself, fought gallantly, and tried to rally their men, the battle was lost for the Prince in less than half an hour. Hundreds of the brave clansmen lay dead on the moor, while numbers of the wounded soon met death from the merciless swords and guns of Cumberland's men. The Prince was forced from the field by his friends, knowing only too well that the ruin which had befallen the hopes and plans of years, meant also ruin to the homes, the liberties and the lives of his devoted Highlanders.

There were many sad and cruel scenes on the cold damp moor, after the battle was over. Most of the wounded were slain on the field, or shot soon after.

It is said that Wolfe, afterwards conqueror on the Plains of Abraham, then aide-de-camp to the Duke, was ordered by him to shoot a wounded Highlander, and refused, saying that he would rather throw up his commission. One poor dwelling, in which a number of the wounded had taken shelter, was burned by Cumberland's men, with its unfortunate inmates.

This was only a foretaste of what was to befall the unhappy people of the west Highlands, who soon saw their homes and fields destroyed, their wives and children left without shelter, their cattle, sheep and other possessions carried off, till what had been a pleasant, well-settled land became a blackened wilderness, which for many years kept up the memory of these savage deeds, and made the very name of an Englishman hated there. Most of the leaders were taken to prison and, in the end, beheaded in London—a severity which did little good and much harm, keeping up for many years the bitter feelings always awakened by war. We may well be thankful that we have fallen on better and more Christian times.

It was the earnest desire of Prince Charles to try to return to France, as soon as possible, so that he might seek to persuade the French King to send to Scotland, even yet, a French force to save the cause and protect the country from the vengeance he foresaw. But it was not an easy matter to escape from the watchful enemies who were determined to hunt him down. For the next five months he led a strange wandering life, much as Bruce had done, centuries before, without soldiers or money, sometimes with a few friends, and sometimes with only one faithful attendant. He wandered up and down the wild western Highlands

and the bleak, rocky isles of the Hebrides ; climbing the misty hillsides, struggling through marshy bogs, or tossing on the waves of wild Highland lochs, sometimes daring the breakers of the sea itself, in an open fishing-boat, piloted by a staunch Highlander. Sometimes his sleeping-place was the bare hillside, sometimes a seaside cave or a fisherman's hut, sometimes a humble Highland home, to whose fireside the hunted Prince was heartily welcomed, though it was at the risk of prison, or even death. Any one of these poor Highlanders might have made himself a rich man for life, by betraying the Prince for the offered reward, but none even thought of such baseness ! The feeling of the people was expressed in lines like these :—

“The muir-cock that craws on the brows of Ben Connal
 He kens (knows) of his bed in a sweet, mossy hame,
 The eagle that soars o’er the cliffs of Clan Ronald,
 Unawed and unhunted his eyrie can claim ;
 The solan can sleep on the shelve of the shore,
 The cormorant roost on his rock of the sea ,
 But, oh, there is one whose hard fate I deplore,
 Nor house, hall nor hame in his country has he !
 The conflict is past and our name is no more,
 There’s nought left but sorrow for Scotland and me ! ”

Yet, hunted as Charles was, there was much in the adventurous life that he enjoyed, when he could shake off the natural sadness which often oppressed him, in realizing the ruin of his cause and the misery it brought. He endured hardships and privations with a patience and cheerfulness which called forth the admiration of his companions, and though he often felt what starvation meant, he probably enjoyed his rough meals on the breezy hillside, or a chance feast with

some of his good friends, far more than he afterwards did the stately banquets of Versailles.

At one time, when he was on one of the Hebrides islands, and in great danger of being caught, he was rescued from the perils that beset him by a brave young lady, now famous as Flora Macdonald, who did for him what the English Miss Lane once did for his grand-uncle, Charles II, after the Battle of Worcester. She took him with her, disguised as her maid Betty Burke, in an open boat, to the isle of Skye, where for a time he was safer. There is a beautiful song about this, beginning :

" Fly, bonny boat, like a bird on the wing,
Onward ! the sailors cry,
And carry the lad who was born to be king
Over the sea to Skye ! "

The sea was rough, and the night was dark, but the crossing was made in safety, after which the Prince parted with his kind rescuer, whom he never saw again. She had to suffer for her kindly action, for she was afterwards kept a prisoner in London for about two years ; but at last she was permitted to return to her island home, where every one honoured her as the rescuer of the Prince.

Charles soon made his way from Skye to the place where, the year before, he had first met his Highland friends who were now in hiding near their ruined homes. In July he spent some time in a cave guarded by the " Seven men of Glen-Morrismoun," whose families and homes had been ruined through their devotion to his cause, yet who entertained and served him to the best of their ability. With their help, he found his way to

the hiding-place of his noble friend Lochiel and another staunch officer named Cluny Macpherson, who were delighted to see him safe and sound. The last shelter he had with them in Scotland was a curious hut called the "Cage," with walls and floor of tree-trunks, interwoven with ropes of heather and birch, and covered with moss, so that it looked like part of the cliff to which it was fastened. Here he lived, for about a week, when he at last got the good news that two French ships, sent to carry him away, were lying at anchor in the very place where he had first landed from the ship that brought him over. In a few days he had safely made his way to the shore, and after a sad parting from the good friends he had to leave, he, with Lochiel and a few other Highland friends, went on board the ship, and was soon fast sailing away from the wild hills of Scotland.

Charles was at first received with great honour in Paris, where his brother Henry welcomed him with open arms. But in spite of all his efforts, he could not persuade the French King or his Ministers to send troops to Scotland, as he so much desired; and his after life was a sad and disappointed one. It was long before the Highlanders gave up their hope that he would some day return; and this feeling has been beautifully expressed in another well-known Scottish song.

"Sweet the lav'rock's note, and lang,
Lilting wildy down the glen,
Still to me he sings ae (one) sang,
Will ye no come back again?"

But it would not have been well for Scotland if he had come back, for each rising of the Jacobites brought

only misery in its train. And now not only were many who had fought for the Prince imprisoned, beheaded or sent as slaves to the West Indies, but land lay desolate, and the Highlanders generally were for a time forbidden to wear their old familiar tartan dress, or the white cockade—the badge of the Stuarts. These things seem very harsh, and George II was a rough and harsh man. But better times came, schools and churches were built, better roads were made, and by and by the Highlands became as quiet and peaceful as any part of the kingdom. As the Highlanders were always good fighters, many of them became soldiers in the British army, and such regiments as the “ Black Watch,” the “ Gordons ” and the “ Seaforth ” and “ Fraser ” Highlanders have fought for the Empire side by side with Englishmen, on famous battlefields all the world over.

But the name of Prince Charles still lives on in Highland hearts and songs, and there has never been any story of faithful loyalty and devotion to a distressed chief, which can surpass the story of the Highland clans and “ Bonnie Prince Charlie.”

CHAPTER XL

LORD CLIVE AND OUR INDIAN EMPIRE

1743-1793

IT may be remembered that Alfred the Great, among other remarkable acts, sent two of his wise men to carry help to some Christians in India ; and how, on their return, they brought back from that distant land precious gems and ornaments of gold. He would have been much surprised if he had been told that, some day, the small island of Britain should govern that great country, with all its riches, and its millions of people, and that his descendants should wear its imperial crown. This came about through many strange events and hard-won fights ; but the foundation of our present great Indian Empire was mainly due to the skill and courage of one man, whose name was Robert Clive.

This vast land of Hindostan, or India, had a very ancient history of its own, not altogether unlike the early history of Britain ; for it had a Stone-Age people, a people something like the ancient Britons, and a conquering race of the same stock as the Saxons. Then it was one of the countries subdued by Alexander the Great, whose empire soon fell to pieces.

About the time when Alfred reigned in Britain, the



Moslem followers of Mohammed began to take possession of India. Their rulers were called Mongols or Moguls, and their ancient capital was called Delhi. One of them, named Baber, was the first to bear the famous title of "The Great Mogul." His grandson, Akbar the Great, ruled India while Queen Elizabeth reigned in Britain, and is considered one of the best of the Indian princes. He ruled India somewhat as the British Empire does now, for he treated the Hindu princes under him in a friendly way, and while he respected their old laws, he tried to put down some of the cruel heathen customs which British rule has now done away with.

But those who reigned after him were not so strong and wise as Akbar, and fierce warlike tribes, called Mahrattas and Afghans, by and by forced their way among the quiet, peaceful Hindus.

India was a country very hard to reach from the West, for it had very few good harbours for ships ; while by land it is enclosed by lofty mountains, whose tops seem almost to reach the sky. It was divided by mighty rivers, two of these, the Indus and the Ganges, being among the largest in the world, and its great trees were taller and its jungles (or forests) denser than anywhere else. Very few people ever went there from Europe until a famous Portuguese sailor, Vasco Da Gama, found out the way to it round the Cape of Good Hope. The Portuguese then began to come to trade with the natives, and for a long time they had it all to themselves ; though about the time of the Spanish Armada, it fell into the hands of the Dutch.

Not long before the death of Queen Elizabeth, in the last year of the sixteenth century, a hundred

London merchants met in London, and subscribed a large sum of money, in order to start a trade with India. And on the last day of the year 1600, the Queen granted them a charter, as the East India Company, which gave them the sole right to trade with the East. Other companies were soon founded in other countries of Europe. But the chief rivals of the English in India were the French, with whom they had so long been fighting in Europe and with whom they now had a long struggle for the mastery in India. The final settling of this conflict was the work of Robert Clive, whom we may therefore call the founder of our Indian Empire.

He was the son of an English country squire in Shropshire, and was born in 1725, twenty years before the Battle of Culloden. While young Charles Edward was dreaming in Italy of regaining his father's kingdom, Robert Clive was growing up, a wild and unruly boy, hating school and study, and so headstrong and violent in his temper that he got into many scrapes, and had not a happy boyhood. But he was also very brave, and fond of doing difficult and daring deeds. One morning he climbed the tall church steeple of the little town, and the people stopped to gaze in wonder at the boy sitting on a spout near the top, though nobody was much surprised to hear that the boy was "wild Bob Clive." One of his teachers, however, saw that he was not really a bad boy, and believed that his unruly pupil would yet do something great, though his father and mother set him down as a hopeless dunce at school, and were glad to send him away to serve the East India Company.

Probably Clive was much pleased to start for a voyage half round the world ; for it was then a long

journey to India, which can now be reached in about three weeks by the Suez Canal. It took Clive a whole year to reach it, because, instead of going round the Cape of Good Hope, he sailed to the west over the Atlantic Ocean, and round Cape Horn, passing the coast of South America. At Brazil his ship stopped long enough for him to learn some Portuguese, which was afterwards of use to him, Brazil being a Portuguese possession. He spent there all the money he had, and arrived at Madras, the end of his journey, without a penny, and in debt; and at first he had a hard time of it. It was not easy for him to settle down to close office work in that hot, sultry land. He pined for his English home, and the free English fields, and, as he was poor and shy, he did not easily make friends. Then his health failed, and he grew so miserable that he even tried to shoot himself, but when the second attempt failed, because the pistol would not go off, he began to think he was meant for something better, after all! He soon found out that he had made a great mistake in neglecting his studies, and as his chief in Madras had a good library, he borrowed books from him, and soon found great pleasure in reading them, and trying to make up for lost time. And by and by his opportunity came for doing something worth while.

Just at this time, France had nearly succeeded in gaining the mastery in India. A daring and clever French leader, named Dupleix, had just taken possession of a large province called the Carnatic—near the town of Madras; and its Fort St. George was surprised and taken by another Frenchman, Governor of Mauritius, who seized all the English property and

made the people promise to let the French keep the town till it should be ransomed. But Dupleix wished to destroy both the town and the fort, and carried off the Englishmen there to his own capital of Pondicherry. Clive was carried off with the rest, but managed to escape, in the dress of a native, to a small settlement called Fort St. David. Thinking that he could be of more use as a soldier than as a clerk, he asked and got an ensign's commission, and began, at twenty-one, his splendid military career, very soon distinguishing himself under Major Lawrence, then the best general in India.

When peace was made, soon after that, between France and England, Clive returned, for a time, to his office work, but soon obtained the post of Commissary to the troops, with the rank of captain. By the time he was twenty-five, the situation in India had grown very alarming; for Dupleix, through the death of a great native viceroy, had managed to secure rule over thirty millions of people in the Carnatic, under the name and authority of the native Moslem Prince or "Nabob," who reigned in the old city of Arcot. The English had tried to prevent this by upholding—as the rightful Nabob—a prince called Mohammed Ali, but the very last town that he held was already besieged, and likely to fall into the hands of the French. Clive saw that this would make the French the masters of India, and he made a bold plan to save it by attacking Arcot, with a scanty force of two hundred Englishmen and three hundred sepoys—or native soldiers—who willingly served the English for hire.

Of the officers, only two had seen service, four being servants of the Company, persuaded by Clive to offer

their services. The night appointed turned out stormy, but—through thunder, lightning, and torrents of rain, such as are known only in the tropics—Clive and his brave men pushed steadily on to storm the gates of Arcot. The native garrison was taken by surprise, and fled without attempting a defence ; Clive's small force took possession without resistance.

But Clive knew very well that he would not long be left in peace ; and he hastened to collect provisions and throw up defences. And very soon an army of three thousand men appeared, and encamped before the walls. Clive made a bold dash out of the city, routed the enemy with great loss, and returned without losing a man. But the French were not going to give up, and they soon collected an army before Arcot of ten thousand strong. The young inexperienced Captain had a hard task to hold the fort. Food was scant, the wells were low and ruinous—yet for fifty days he and his small garrison kept that great army at bay. His men, though of differing colour, race and religion, were devoted to their leader, and patiently bore all privations. At one time the sepoy came to tell him that they would be content with the water strained from the boiled rice, while the grain itself was kept for the European soldiers, who required more food than they did. Few instances are known of more unselfish conduct on the part of fighting men.

For fifty days the siege went on, while the garrison felt more and more the pressure of hunger. The Moslem Commander tried to bribe Clive with large promises, declaring that if he would not yield, he would storm the fort and kill all his men. Clive knew he was about to do this, and though he was sleeping from

exhaustion at the moment when the attack began, he and his men were ready for the furious and excited Indian attack. It was a strange sight that Clive beheld, for in front of the advancing army marched great elephants with strong plates of iron bound to their heads, for battering in the gates. But as soon as the huge beasts felt the sting of the English bullets, they turned back, trampling down the men who had been urging them on, and causing great confusion. Then masses of native soldiers dashed fiercely against the weak places of the wretched walls ; but the well-trained British troops—ranged in double rows—kept on firing till they drove off their assailants after an hour's fighting, with a loss of four hundred men and several guns, while the brave defenders had lost only five or six of their small numbers. For some time, however, they feared the return of the army ; but it was seen no more.

Another victory, soon after this, established Clive's fame as a soldier, and made people feel that, wherever he commanded, the British arms were sure to win. The good and brave General Lawrence much prized his aid, declaring that he was born a soldier ; for, without military training, he led out an army like an experienced officer as well as a brave soldier. And though Clive's nature was proud, and often overbearing, he was always loyal to the orders of his military superior.

Clive's health, however, seldom good in the Indian climate, gave way soon after this, from the strain he had been enduring, and he felt it necessary to go home for a time. Having married, at Madras, the sister of a famous English astronomer named Maskelyne, he returned to Britain, just ten years after he had left it to seek his for-

tune. The London merchants of the East India Company knew, by this time, how much they had to thank him for. They called him "General Clive," and presented him with a sword set in diamonds, which he refused to take until one like it was given to his friend Lawrence. His father and family could not understand how the wild schoolboy should have turned out so well. Clive, however, tried to make up for the trouble he had given them, and was now able to help his father out of money troubles with the money he had saved in India. He wished to go into Parliament : but though he was elected a member, Party opposition prevented him from taking his seat.

As his services were still much needed in India, he returned thither after two or three years in England. He went back as Colonel Clive and Governor of Fort St. David. He soon found work to do in taking an important stronghold, which had been the den of a dreaded pirate. Just then, there came from Bengal startling tidings which shocked all the British people in India, and called him to Fort William, on the Bay of Bengal, close to what is now the great city of Calcutta. This was one of the richest portions of India, but the natives were weak and indolent, and were, at this time, ruled by a stupid and cruel youth of twenty, whose name was Surajah Dowlah. He had been spoiled from his childhood, for no one had ever dared to contradict him, so that he grew up utterly selfish, even finding pleasure in torturing birds and other animals, and so was not likely to be very kind to the human beings in his power. He had always hated the English, who, he thought, were so rich that he could get a great deal of money by robbing them. And as a rich native had taken refuge at Cal-

cutta, where the English lived, protected by their fort, he set out with a large army to take it. There was no Clive at Fort William, nor any soldiers to defend him ; and the Governor and Commandant jumped into a boat and made their escape, leaving the helpless people there to shift for themselves. Of course the fort was soon taken, and all the English people fell into the hands of the Nabob, as Surajah was called, who promised to save their lives, and then went to sleep, leaving his prisoners at the mercy of his brutal guards.

These poor people, numbering one hundred and forty-six—men, women and children—were all driven at the point of the sword, into a room only twenty feet square. It was a hot summer night, such as English people find it hard to endure in India, even in a large airy room, with great fans in constant motion. Packed closely together, as these poor people were, in a small room, with only two or three high windows, their sufferings soon became intense. They cried for mercy, tried to break open the doors, and offered large rewards to the guards to let them out, but all in vain. The stifled prisoners—mad with despair—fought for places at the windows, trod each other down in their struggles for air and water, and even begged their guards to fire among them, and so end their misery. But the guards only laughed at their distress. When the morning came, and the door was at last opened, only twenty-three were found alive, and these had grown so pale and ghastly through the suffering of that terrible night, that their nearest friends could hardly have known them. The bodies of the hundred and twenty-three victims were then thrown into a pit, and hastily covered up. When this horrible event became known among the

English in India, there was a general outcry for the punishment of the murderers. Clive at once set out at the head of some two thousand troops, fifteen hundred of whom were sepoys. The wicked Nabob thought himself quite safe in his palace of Moorshedabad, near Calcutta, but Clive, who was soon master at Fort William, would have liked to punish him forthwith. But his power was limited, and the cruel chief pretended to be willing to make great amends. Clive, however, soon found that it was useless to trust him ; and then he made the great mistake of stooping to deceit himself—a course that never comes to any good. He made a show of great friendliness, while plotting to destroy him, and when a powerful native, who knew his plans, seemed likely to betray them to the Nabob, he prevailed upon him to keep silence, by making promises of money which he did not intend to keep.

Clive had gained the help of another native prince, named Mir Jaffier, who wished to reign instead of Surajah Dowlah. But when the time came to fight he was afraid to join Clive's army for the battle which was to settle the fate of the British power in India. This was the famous battle of Plassey, and as Clive led his little army on towards the great Indian camp, he came to a small river, which his force could easily cross ; but he knew that if the battle should go against them, none would be left to return. For once he hesitated, and called his officers together for a Council, when he found that most of them thought it would be too great a risk to fight. Clive went to a little grove close by, and thought for an hour alone ; after which he gave orders that his army should cross the river next morning. Then, after a long day's march, the little English force of three

thousand British troops, with two thousand sepoy, came in sight of the great Indian army of about fifty thousand, fifteen thousand of these being horsemen. Clive's army encamped, long after sunset, in a grove of mango trees, from which the British soldiers could hear the clashing of native drums and cymbals ; and at dawn the whole mass began to move towards Clive's army, covering the wide plain. Behind the foot soldiers, armed with bows and arrows, firelocks, pikes and swords, came fifty-three great guns, drawn by white oxen, and pushed from behind by elephants.

But in the cannonade which at once began, these guns had little effect compared with the English field-pieces, which killed many natives, and among them some of the Nabob's best officers. The Indian ranks began to flinch and get into disorder ; and Dowlah himself was in such a state of terror that he was easily persuaded to command a retreat. Then Clive ordered his troops to advance and charge ; and the confused mass of natives gave way at once before the trained British soldiers—carrying with them the small body of French that tried to hold out. This great victory of Plassey was a strong contrast to the bloody battle of Blenheim ; for with a loss of only twenty-two men killed and wounded, Clive had completely routed an army of fifty thousand, of whom only five hundred were killed, and had won the Province of Bengal for the British Empire.

It would take too long to describe how Clive afterwards settled matters with Mir Jaffier, and how the cruel Surajah Dowlah was at last put to death by that prince, in spite of his frantic entreaties for mercy, which moved Jaffier but not his son—a youth very like his prisoner in character. When the heads of the East India Com-



BATTLE OF PLASSEY.

Clive on the roof of Surajah Dowlah's hunting-lodge,
examining the enemy's lines.

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pany in England heard of the great victory of Plassey, they made Clive Governor of Bengal, which gave him immense power in the South of India. And though he had to meet a new enemy, the son of the last Mogul, or Emperor, who was now a prisoner at his old capital of Delhi, Clive's fame as a conqueror had become so great, that the enemy's forces dispersed at his approach, without even risking a skirmish.

In gratitude to Clive for dispersing his enemies, Mir Jaffier made him a present of the forces of the young Mogul, who wished to displace him, Mir Jaffier, made Clive a present of the yearly rent paid to him by the Company for lands belonging to him, a gift worth thirty thousand pounds a year. Yet very soon after, this same prince (or Nabob), becoming jealous of the British power, began secretly to encourage the Dutch, who had a settlement in the island of Java, to send ships to Calcutta. Clive had no desire to fight with the Dutch, with whom Britain was at peace; but he knew that their coming would be dangerous to the British power in Bengal. So—though they had more men than he, his courage as usual carried all before it. He took their ships, routed their troops, and forced their leaders to agree to refrain from interfering with British rule.

Three months later, Clive sailed again for England, having now become a hero whom all delighted to honour. George III, whose father had died young, had now succeeded his grandfather, George II, and received Clive with great respect; and his famous Minister, the first Pitt, who afterwards became Lord Chatham, gave him high praise, calling him a "heaven-born general." Being now a very rich man, Clive treated his family most generously, sharing with them a

large part of his wealth, and especially caring for the comfort of his parents. He now took his seat in the House of Commons, and as he had won much influence in the East India Company, he helped to set its management on a better plan than had hitherto been followed. For both the East India Company and the English in India cared only for growing rich by trade ; and in those days no one seemed to think of sharing, with the poor heathen there, the blessings Christianity had brought to Britain. And as the Company wanted a great deal of money to carry on their trade and to divide among themselves, they gave their officials in India such small pay that it was impossible for Europeans to live comfortably, on it in such a hot country. They were allowed, therefore, to increase this poor pay by squeezing out of the poor natives all the money they could, so that between the demands of the Company and its needy servants, the English were more and more hated by the natives, as the Company grew and prospered. The natives began to flee from the white men, as their fathers had done from the Mahratta robbers ; disorders arose, owing to bad government, and even the sepoy's grew rebellious, and were often shot for mutiny. The best part of the British people felt that this state of things was a disgrace to the nation, and even the Company felt that Lord Clive of Plassey—as he was now called—was the only man who could set things right. He was therefore appointed Governor and Commander-in-Chief in Bengal, and sailed for India for the third time, with full powers to take such measures as he thought best.

He spent a year and a half there, in fighting the wrongs and abuses which he found harder to put

down than to win the battle of Plassey ; for he had to contend with the greed and the bad passions of his fellow-countrymen. However his noble spirit and dauntless courage triumphed in the end. He devised a means for providing fair and regular pay for the Company's servants, without hardship to any one—put a stop to the ill-treatment of the natives, and though the officers of the army even attempted a mutiny, he forced them, also, to submit to the just rule he established. And he also managed to pacify the neighbouring native princes, and to secure, from the defeated Emperor at Delhi a grant to the Company of full power over the whole province of Bengal.

But in doing all these things, Lord Clive had made many enemies, for there were many people in England, as well as India, who did not find so just a rule for their own advantage. And when the state of his health obliged him to return home, his enemies there did all they could to ruin him. They spread all kinds of wild and false stories about him, and even blamed him for a famine caused by scarcity of rain, three years after his departure ! Worst of all—they brought charges against him in Parliament, the strongest being that of the deceit he had practised on the treacherous native who had threatened to betray his plans for punishing the massacre of the Black Hole of Calcutta. The great present of lands that he had received from Mir Jaffier was also brought against him, on the ground that—having gained his victory through the soldiers of the State, he should not have taken anything for himself. Clive thought he had been right in taking this present, when he might have taken a great deal more for himself, and also that he had done no harm in deceiving a traitor, for

so good an object. But the House of Commons did not agree with him. So—after long and careful consideration of the case, during which Lord Clive defended himself with great force and eloquence, the House of Commons decided that he had at one time abused his great power, and set a bad example to other men in similar positions ; but that he had also rendered very great services to his country, for which he must be held in honour. And so the matter ended. It seemed hard that, after all his gallant actions, Clive should have had to bear this reproach ; but we must remember that nothing can make a wrong thing right, and that the strength of British rule in India to-day lies in the trust placed by the people of India in its justice and good faith.

Lord Clive was not yet fifty, and it seemed as if he should have lived long and happily in England, surrounded by many friends and much honour. But he never quite got over what he felt as unjust blame, and in England he did not find the right kind of work for his great powers. “ He had nothing to do, and nothing to wish for.” And in such circumstances, neither his great wealth nor honours nor friends nor the fine houses he built for himself in town and country could make him truly happy. Besides this, he suffered much from ill health brought on by his long stay in the hot climate of India ; and—to relieve severe pain—he got into the dangerous and often ruinous habit of taking opium. This helped to bring back the gloomy fits of his boyhood, and in one of these he took his own life, as he had twice tried to do, when he was a friendless lad. It was a strange and sad close to the life of so brave a hero !

The work which Clive had so nobly begun in India

was carried on by another famous Englishman, who, though not—like him—a great soldier was not less gifted than he. This was Warren Hastings, seven years younger than Clive—the last descendant of an ancient family claiming descent from the great sea-king, Hastings, who was conquered by Alfred the Great. Unlike Clive he was—as a child—very fond of study, and loved to hear and dream of the brave deeds of his forefathers. When only seven years old, he lay, one bright summer day, on the edge of a stream that flowed through the lands his family had owned, and he then made up his mind that he would some day win back those lands for his own, a resolve he never forgot.

At this time, being an orphan, he lived with his grandfather, a clergyman, close to the old family manor-house of Daylesford. But on the death of his grandfather he was sent to a London school, where he had insufficient food (which he thought stunted his growth), and afterwards to the great Westminster School, where one of his schoolmates was a boy afterwards known as the famous poet, William Cowper, author of “John Gilpin,” and many other fine poems. At fourteen he excelled his comrades in lessons, as well as in rowing and swimming, and was hoping to go to study at Oxford, when his kind uncle’s death made a sad change in his life. Instead of going to Oxford, he was sent to learn book-keeping ; and at seventeen was shipped off, as Clive had been, to be a clerk in India.

He had been working for two years under the East India Company at Calcutta, when the sad affair of “The Black Hole” took place. His life was saved by his being, at that time, employed at a town close to the Nabob’s palace at Moorshedabad and, while a

prisoner there, he had a chance of showing his great courage and ability. At Plassey he fought as a volunteer under Clive, who saw his capabilities, and got for him a high office under Mir Jaffier. From this position he rose, step by step, until he became, after Clive, Governor of Bengal. He showed himself a most able ruler, and carried on Clive's work, till instead of the old native and Moslem tyrannies, English law and justice were established in somewhat the same form in which they govern India to-day. He tried to know the natives and sympathize with their feelings, thus winning their affection and respect, so that even the mothers and little children learned to know and love his name. And by his firmness, promptness and energy, he maintained the power of the Empire against Mah-ratta robbers and Moslem foes, stirred up against British rule by the agents of France.

Warren Hastings did these great things in the face of many difficulties, for the men at the head of the Company at home cared more for riches for themselves than for the good of the people of India or the honour of England. And as they were perpetually asking him to "send them more money," he had to devise all sorts of ways to do this without oppressing the natives. He managed, however, to raise large sums of money for the Company without laying heavier burdens on the Hindus, and in this he showed great skill and ability. But though he was, on the whole, wise and just and merciful, he did some things which seemed to many neither just nor merciful, and which have left a stain on his memory that has never been quite removed.

After living in India for more than thirty years, during thirteen of which he was Governor of Bengal, Hastings

returned to England, to find himself honoured by the King, and received with great esteem by the people generally. But his enemies soon began to make charges against him, and insisted that—like Clive—he should be tried for these before Parliament. The Commons agreed that he should be tried by the House of Lords ; and he spoke as eloquently in his own defence as the famous orator Burke did against him. The trial dragged on for eight years, during which time many things were inquired into, and many changes took place among those who were the judges. At last, after spending most of his fortune in his defence, he was fully acquitted ; and the East India Company, in consideration of his great services, granted him a large annuity for his life.

But he never received, as Clive did, the honours that he so well deserved ; remaining plain Warren Hastings, leading the quiet country life that he preferred. Towards the close of his life, he became a member of the Privy Council of Britain, and the Prince of Wales, afterwards George IV, once presented him to the Emperor of Russia as “ the man who had saved the British Dominions in India.” He died at the age of eighty-six, after a peaceful old age spent in that very home of his forefathers, which, as a child of seven, he had determined some day to make his own.

CHAPTER XLI

WESLEY AND WILBERFORCE

1745-1791

DURING the years when Clive and Warren Hastings were so gallantly laying the foundations of British rule in India, some good and great men were doing a noble work for the Empire at home. In the year 1756 began what is called—from its length—the “Seven Years’ War,” in which Britain was allied with Frederick the Great of Prussia in fighting the still dangerous power of France in Europe. But there were other evils that needed to be fought, in England itself.

Since the wise reign of William III, the country had been growing richer, and the towns and cities larger and more prosperous, but the wicked ways still prevailed that had grown so common during the previous reigns. Drunkenness, crimes and vices of all sorts abounded among the people. Many even of the clergy and the bishops had grown careless and idle ; and some of them scarcely knew their own charges. There were few to preach like Latimer, or the “Poor Parson” of Chaucer, who “taught what Christ had taught, but first he followed it himself.”

Both rich and poor had drifted far away from the fear and love of God, which—more than aught

else—had made Britain great and free ; and the evil fruits of this were still too plain. We have seen how the East India Company cared more for money than for justice, and the same thing was to be seen everywhere. Men often went into Parliament—not to serve their country, as noble Englishmen had been used to do, but for the sake of what they could get out of it for themselves. And as they did not scruple to buy the votes that sent them there, from rich people who had many votes in their power, they thought it no harm to sell their own votes in Parliament to any who would pay for them. This is often called “ corruption,” and is most shameful, and hurtful to the welfare of any country.

The lot of the poorest people in England had—as we know—been a hard one from very early times. And though the country, as a whole, was much richer now, the poor were very little better off. There were greater numbers of them, too, and little was done or thought of to help and teach them. The parish churches were not more numerous than they had been long before. There were, indeed, many parish-schools in Scotland, which did much good ; and in Wales there were a few schools for religious teaching. But in England generally there were no schools for the poor. Therefore many children grew up without learning to read or to know what is right, and often became thieves and robbers, and even murderers. And as there was then no proper police, lawless people sometimes started riots, and while these lasted they would burn down houses and plunder as they pleased. Very severe laws were made to keep down crime. Sometimes twenty young lads were hanged at one time

for stealing ; and they could be hanged for even cutting down a cherry-tree. People did not remember the wise words of Sir Thomas More, that—when children have been left to be badly taught, and then punished for the crimes they have thus learned,—“ what is this but to make thieves, and then punish them ? ” And—as Sir Thomas had foretold—these harsh laws did not make things any better, and the great increase of drinking-habits made them much worse. In general, the poor had scarcely any Bibles, which, indeed, few could have read. But there were still many good people who kept Christianity alive in the country, and in time England had again great preachers, to do for it what the early missionaries had done in the old Saxon days, and what the Friars and the Lollards and Latimer had done in later days.

The first of these preachers was George Whitfield. He had been a poor lad, who had worked his way up to an education at Oxford ; and—being gifted with a wonderful voice and great eloquence, and also being thoroughly in earnest—he became the greatest preacher of his day. He travelled over the northern moors, as Aidan and Cuthbert used to do, preaching to the ignorant field labourers, and the Cornish miners, in simple earnest words that touched their hearts and often made the tears flow in “ white channels down their cheeks.” He may also be called the first English missionary to the heathen, for he crossed the ocean several times to carry the Gospel of Christ to the American Indians, and the negro slaves of Georgia ; and he even bought little negroes, as Gregory the Great had bought Saxon boys, that they might be brought up as Christians.

It was not long before he found helpers in two other

Oxford students named Wesley, the two eldest of the fifteen children of a good parish-clergyman in Lincolnshire. Charles, the younger of the two, wrote and sang many beautiful hymns, which greatly helped Whitfield in his preaching. But the elder, John Wesley, not only wrote fine hymns and preached noble sermons, but founded and led a great Society for preaching the Gospel throughout England. He and his brother, while at Oxford, were very fond of "method" or order in everything they did, so that their friends used to call them "Methodists." And this afterwards became the name of Wesley's society of preachers, which at length grew into the great Wesleyan Methodist Church, now spread over all the world.

While a very young man, John Wesley also crossed the ocean to preach to the negroes of Georgia. Not succeeding as he had hoped, he returned to England, where he learned from Whitfield how to reach people's hearts and consciences, and soon became almost as great a preacher as Whitfield. But he was also a great leader, and he gave his long life and his great learning to the work of spreading throughout England the light of the Gospel, through which there grew up again a better and happier national life.

He did not at first like to go out to preach in the fields as Whitfield did, following the example of Christ Himself; for Wesley said that he "could not bring himself to that strange way." But when he found that he could, in this very way, speak to many people who would not come to church, he felt that it was his duty to do so, and for half a century he journeyed through England, preaching wherever he could find people to hear him. Like Wyckliffe, he sent out his "poor preachers"

too ; and before his death he had more than a hundred and fifty of these, busy in teaching English men and women how to lead a better life. Besides his hymns, he wrote a number of good books, and he spent the money that they brought him in helping many poor people. His loving service for God and man and his wise management of his " Society " made him a great force in England, where the Gospel was once again preached freely to the poor ; and from that time, the clergy of the Church of England grew much more earnest in their work, and more truly Christian in their lives, and therefore more truly respected by their people. It has been since said by a wise man, that it was the preaching of Wesley that saved England from the horrors of a French Revolution ! His " Society " afterwards became the Great Wesleyan Methodist Church, which has done much for the English people ; but he himself always loved the old Church of England, and died a member of it, at the great age of ninety-eight years.

Many people were roused, by the preaching of Wesley, to do more for the good of the poor and ignorant. In the old city of Gloucester, a good man named Robert Raikes began to gather a number of children together in Sunday schools, which made the beginning of teaching the children of the poor. About the same time, a good work in this way was done by a famous lady named Hannah More, who lived among the wild Cheddar Hills near Bristol, where there were many coal-mines and miners, and where the people were almost heathen. She used to say that " in the whole parish there was but one Bible, and *that* was used to prop a flower-pot." Besides writing good books for

the rich, to remind them of their duty to God and to their fellow-men, she wrote some excellent tales which the poorest could understand, one of which—*The Shepherd of Salisbury Plain*—was more widely read than almost any book of that time. She and her sisters used to bring the poor women together into little “Clubs,” to help each other, and every year they gave a school-feast to about a thousand children near her home—a thing unknown before.

About the same time, Anna Barbauld, another lady who, like Hannah More, was the daughter of a teacher, began to write pretty and instructive stories for children, which were probably the first books published in England for children to read. All these things greatly helped to make the English people wiser and better.

But a great evil that needed to be fought then was the injustice with which many poor people were treated, and the frightful state of the prisons in which people were often shut up for very slight offences, and sometimes for none at all. For—even yet—the rules of the Great Charter, forbidding that any one should be sent to prison without just cause, were not always observed, and men were often kept prisoners for years because they owed money which they could not pay. And often when prisoners were acquitted or released, the gaolers would not let them go, till they had paid them what they wanted for themselves, and if they could not pay, they kept them strictly shut up.

About thirty years after Wesley had begun to preach, a noble Christian gentleman named John Howard was made sheriff of the county in which he lived, and was shocked when he saw the frightful condition of the prisons put under his charge. He found

them, in general, dirty and unwholesome—filled with criminals and people in debt, all crowded together. Some of the cells were almost as bad as the “Black Hole of Calcutta,” so that a miserable man who was kept in one of these begged that he might be hanged, and so put out of his misery. Mr. Howard insisted on trying what it was like and stayed in it until he could bear the darkness and filth no longer. After he had seen many things of this kind, he wrote a book about them to rouse the English people to put an end to such a disgraceful state of things, and to do what they could to make criminals better men.

From that time, the treatment of prisoners in Britain became very different, and the state of the prisons much improved. But Howard did not confine his efforts to the improvement of English gaols, but made journeys to Germany and other countries, to carry on the same good work there. As the Plague was then working havoc in European prisons, he went to see the hospitals for its treatment in Russia and the East, in order to try to stop this terrible disease. But there he was seized with a fatal fever, and passed away from his labour of love on earth—a true Christian hero.

Another of the noblest Englishmen at this time of improvement was the famous William Wilberforce, who was a member of Parliament during the trial of Warren Hastings. He came of an old English family and was, as a lad, as lively and full of fun as Robert Clive, though much more amiable and fond of study. He was born—as well as the second William Pitt, the son of Lord Chatham—in the year 1759: a great year for Britain, as we shall by and by see. Like Warren Hastings, he was early left an orphan, but unlike him he

was sent from school to Cambridge. There he became a great friend of young William Pitt and some other famous men ; and at twenty-five he was chosen member of Parliament for Hull, his birthplace. At first he did not trouble himself much with public affairs, being very fond of amusing himself with his young friends. With young Pitt, he made a pleasant trip to Paris, during which they visited the gay Court of Louis XVI at Fontainebleau, so soon to be wrecked by the violence of the French Revolution. And soon after his return he made his first notable speech in Parliament, as member for Yorkshire, which he continued to be for many years.

He had now grown from a lively and frolicsome youth into a very charming man, greatly loved and esteemed by all his friends. While full of life and spirit, he was most kind in his manner to every one he met—and especially kind and polite to all women, the poor as well as the rich, as every good man should be. And while still a young man, he learned to love God, and determined to serve Him with all his heart and strength, and to make a stand against everything wrong and bad for the people. And he set two things before himself, as the special work that God had given him to do. One of these was the same for which Wesley and Hannah More had been labouring—to make the lives of the English people better. The other was—to make an end of the greatest disgrace to the name of Free England and one of the greatest curses to humanity—"the odious traffic in human beings, called the slave-trade."

This wicked traffic, as we have seen, had begun at Bristol, and had been stopped by William the Con-

queror ; but it had been started again in the time of Queen Elizabeth by a sea-captain named John Hawkins. It was carried on by men so hard-hearted that they did not care what they made others suffer, so that they themselves might grow rich, and the wickedness and the suffering connected with it can scarcely be imagined. Some attempts had been made to check it, but those who tried this had not been determined enough, and it was a hard battle that had to be fought against it ; for the traders, in their greed for riches, were set upon keeping it up.

The slaves were brought chiefly from Africa, and were sometimes bought from their enemies, who had made them prisoners in war, and sometimes were caught and carried off by force from their homes. A band of strong men would attack a village of peaceful people, and seize all the women and children they could find. Then they were chained all together, and driven, like cattle, to the sea-shore, where ships lay ready to carry them far away, in which they were packed together in the ship's hold, almost as close as the Englishmen in the Black Hole of Calcutta ; and it often happened that many died of fever or of foul air during the long sea-voyage.

It was a long time since slaves had been allowed to be kept in Britain, but selfish English traders encouraged the traffic ; and, under Queen Anne, England had not been ashamed to take—as part of what Marlborough had won—the sole right to trade in slaves between Africa and the dominions of Spain. Englishmen had also brought slavery into the American colonies and the West Indies, where, because of the hot climate, it was convenient to use them as labourers. And the people's hearts were so hardened

about this sin, that even good men sometimes took part in it, and tried to defend it.

But since Whitfield and Wesley and others had been teaching the English people more of true Christianity, they had begun to see the wickedness of this horrible trade, and its effect in desolating South Africa. Wilberforce thought and wrote a great deal about it, and one evening, after a quiet talk with young Pitt, on a hill overlooking a lovely valley, he made up his mind to begin his long fight against it, as the old knights used to begin their Crusades against the Turks.

This was not a fight with swords and guns, but one of many speeches and weary hours in the House of Commons in the endeavour to persuade the members to make a law putting an end to it. For twenty long years he fought, in this way, the opposition of the slave-traders and their friends, who placed every possible difficulty in his way. When it became felt that the end of the traffic must come, they urged that it should not be stopped all at once, but slowly, by degrees ; as if such wicked cruelty could be stopped too soon ! Three times Wilberforce was defeated—first in trying to get it made unlawful at once—next when he tried to restrict the number of slaves brought into the colonies, and again, when he urged that no more British money should be used in procuring slaves for other countries. And when, near the end of the century, the House of Commons voted that the Slave Trade should be at once abolished, the House of Lords rejected the Bill, so that it could not become law. Just at the close of the eighteenth century—more than a hundred years after the Battle of the Boyne—Ireland was at last peaceably united with Great Britain, after a long continuance of

misgovernment, distraction and discontent. This last had broken out once more in rebellion, which caused many cruel deeds. But now it was agreed that the Irish should become one with the British nation, and should send a hundred members to the House of Commons at Westminster. And every one of these members helped Mr. Wilberforce, by voting for putting an end to the slave-trade.

He was helped, too, by the sympathy of many good Englishmen, and more especially by two faithful helpers—Thomas Clarkson and Granville Sharp, whose names should never be forgotten in connexion with this great cause. Mr. Sharp, a noble, large-hearted English gentleman, was President of the Society formed to push on the movement, and Thomas Clarkson was the faithful and laborious Secretary by whom a large part of the work was done, even to the injury of his own health.

At last, after twenty years of persevering effort, Mr. Wilberforce and his friends had the great satisfaction of seeing the final passing of a law, forever doing away with the wicked slave-trade, amid the applause of Parliament and the whole civilized world. And their rejoicing was not the less great, because, like King William III, and other good men, they felt that God had enabled them to carry through, in the face of great difficulties, the work to which He had called them. But it was not till after another quarter of a century had passed—two years before the death of Wilberforce—that his life work was crowned by getting slavery itself abolished throughout the British dominions. And then the flag of Britain became indeed the flag of freedom, since—wherever it waves—every slave becomes free!

About the same time many other great things were done for the peace and freedom of the British Empire, and Mr. Wilberforce did what he could for these as long as he lived. One of these was the foundation of the great British and Foreign Bible Society, which has sent innumerable copies of the Scriptures throughout not only the British Empire, but the whole world. Another was the beginning of the great work of Foreign Missions, until then scarcely thought of, which has done so much for mankind, and also for the true advancement of the British Empire. The improvement of the prisons, the staying of the Plague and the schools for the poor also received his aid and sympathy, nor did he forget to care for the teaching of the poor Irish people. His memory has long been honoured for his noble life of work for others, which he did from his heart, and with his whole heart :—happy, as every such worker must always be, in the fulfilment of the task God has given him to do.

CHAPTER XLII

LORD CHATHAM AND THE CONQUEST OF CANADA

1748-1759

WE have now to go back a good while to some things that happened before the time of Wilberforce and the victory of Plassey, which was the first victory that for some time had crowned the British arms with success. For the first two or three years of the "Seven Years' War" in Europe had been dark ones for Britain, which, just then, had only three regiments fit for service. Its Prime Minister, the Duke of Newcastle, was very incapable, and the Government, like the Parliament, was very selfish and corrupt. The King's son, the cruel Duke of Cumberland, was beaten at Fontenoy, the strong post of Minorca was taken by France, and the English Admiral Byng, who had been sent to attack the French fleet, felt forced to retreat before it, which made the English nation so angry that he was very harshly condemned to death for his failure. And so broken did the spirit of the country seem, that an English nobleman, Lord Chesterfield, declared—"We are no longer a nation!"

But in the years 1758 and 1759 three great British victories brightened its outlook, and altered the course of the world's history. The first, that of Plassey, as we have seen, founded the British Empire in India. The second was that of Minden, which, with a gallant naval victory won by Admiral Hawkes at Quiberon, wiped out the defeats of Fontenoy and Minorca, stopped a threatened invasion of England by France, and helped Frederick the Great to establish his friendly kingdom of Prussia. The third was that won by Wolfe on the Heights of Abraham, near Quebec, which decided the conquest of Canada.

The great improvement in the affairs of Britain at this time was, in no small degree, due to the patriotism and force of the man who now came to the front in its government—the first William Pitt, afterwards Lord Chatham. He was the grandson of a former Governor of Madras, and, as a young cavalry officer, had been one of the band of “ patriots ” who opposed Walpole. Being dismissed from the army on this account, he thenceforth gave his life to his country in Parliament instead of in war, and became the greatest statesman Britain had possessed since she had lost William III. He was the **first Prime Minister** who made her power and honour his first aim ; for he never tried to enrich himself, as those about him were striving to do. He cared for power because of what it would enable him to do for England in her troubles ; and the end showed that he was right when he declared—“ I know that I can save the country ; and I know no other man who can ! ” He was determined to rouse England out of the miserable state in which “ twenty thousand Frenchmen could shake

her," and he did more than he said. By his courage, his devoted patriotism, his fervid eloquence, and, most of all, by his pure life and lofty spirit, he lifted his distressed country out of its weakness, to be one of the greatest powers of the world. He saw, as Wesley did, how the English people had fallen into selfish ways, and was divided into parties set against each other, and he called upon these to "be one people again, and to forget everything but the nation's good." He himself set the example, and Frederick the Great soon declared that now "England had got a man at last" to lead her to victory. He was often called the "Great Commoner" because he always felt himself working for the people, and it was said by a soldier of that time that no one ever went to see him who did not come away braver than he went.

Pitt very soon saw that something must be done at once to protect the British colonies in America from the growing power of France, which had to be fought there, as well as in Europe and India. For more than a century France had been contending with Britain for the possession of the great new continent. A few years before the Pilgrim Fathers had landed at Plymouth Rock, the gallant Champlain had founded Quebec, with a fort on the Heights above it, to guard the approach by the St. Lawrence from the sea. La Salle and other brave explorers pushed their way, with extreme labour and hardship, through the untracked wilds, from the cold north to Mexico, and from the Alleghany Mountains to the Pacific coast. The war-like French pioneers in the north soon began a long and harassing warfare with the English settlements by the sea, and the savage Indians were always ready

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to join the war-parties of either side in desolating raids which brought calamity and destruction to the life of the growing country.

During the "Seven Years' War" it was of special importance to both England and France to win the mastery of the New World. Louis XIV had never realized the importance of this, and his successor, Louis XV, utterly lost the power of doing it because he sent so many of his best soldiers to die in useless battles in Europe. And as there had never been any boundary fixed between the British and French colonies in America, the British settlers tried to push their way farther into the continent, and the people of New France went on trying to keep them out.

By this time thirteen British colonies had grown up in America. Of these Massachusetts was the oldest and most important of the four original New England States, the others being Connecticut, New Hampshire and Rhode Island. The people of New England were, as we have seen, the descendants of English Puritans, obliged to leave England for freedom of conscience. They were brave, patriotic and true to what they thought right, though sometimes stern and severe towards others. They had schools in all their villages, in which their children were well taught, and they kept up their old English laws under Governors sent from England, Rhode Island alone choosing its own Governor.

Pennsylvania, as we know, was founded by the Quaker, William Penn, who left all settlers free to follow their own kind of worship, and protected both Indians and negroes from injustice and cruelty. In it there were many peaceful and industrious Quakers,

but there were also Germans, Dutch, Swedes and Irishmen, who did not always agree among themselves. Its capital, Philadelphia, was the largest city in the colonies, except Boston in Massachusetts.

The colony of New York had been first settled by Dutch people, and had been taken from Holland during the war in 1664, while the people of New Jersey were a mixture of Dutch and English. Virginia was the oldest of all, for we have seen how Sir Walter Raleigh founded it and named it for Queen Elizabeth. There the land was chiefly owned by rich men, very like the country squires in old England, except that they owned slaves as well as land. They were brave and proud, and a good deal like the old Cavaliers in their manners and ways. There were as many negro slaves as white people in the colony ; and among the latter there were many very poor and ignorant, with little teaching to make them better ; for there were no free schools there. Between it and the sea Lord Baltimore had founded Maryland, as we should remember, on the same principles of religious freedom that Penn laid down in Virginia ; and little Delaware grew up beside it.

South of Virginia, there were North and South Carolina, called after Charles II, and Georgia, the newest of all, named after George II. All these last became what were known as the Southern States, which gradually became very different from the Northern ones in many ways, especially in regard to negro slavery. Each of these colonies had its individual government, and they were separated by great forests and rugged hills, with only rough " trails," or tracks, between them, so that it was very hard to get them to stand all to-

gether against the French power, which was entirely under one governor and one general.

The settlements and posts of France were scattered along the centre of the continent, from north to south. On the edge of the Gulf of St. Lawrence, stood the strong fortress of Louisbourg, from which French ships often came out to attack British trading vessels. Then—farther inland on the great St. Lawrence itself, there was the fortified rock of Quebec, guarding the waterway from the sea. Farther inland still, just where the great river flows out of Lake Ontario, stood Fort Frontenac, founded by the famous French Governor of that name, where now stands the city of Kingston. Fort Niagara stood near the mighty cataract of that name ; and to the south-west there were forts scattered along the valley of the Ohio, and as far south as Louisiana. To the westward of New France—as French Canada was then called—between it and New England—lay the beautiful Lake Champlain, at the foot of which stood the famous Fort Ticonderoga, one of the most important of the French posts, which was several times taken and retaken during the war that now began.

The English colonies had been trying to withstand the French, chiefly with their own militia (or volunteer soldiers) who found themselves hardly equal to such a task. But the high spirit and strong will of Pitt changed the face of matters. The discouraged colonists were soon cheered by the arrival of a strong force of British troops, and also by Pitt's order that the colonial officers should take equal rank with their British comrades in the field. They speedily raised an army of twenty thousand men, and taxed themselves

to support it. Then three different divisions were sent out to meet the French. The first, under Admiral Boscawen and General Amherst, sailed to the island of Cape Breton to attack Louisbourg, defended as it was by a garrison of five thousand men, under a brave French officer who made a gallant resistance. Nevertheless it was taken, and with it the French fleet in its harbour. And one of the foremost in winning this victory was Colonel James Wolfe, afterwards the hero of Quebec, which, even then, he was most anxious to attack at once. Instead of this, he was obliged, by his commander's orders, and sorely against his will, to waste his time in marching along the shore of the Gulf, to destroy and burn the huts of the poor French fishermen ; though he allowed no ill-usage of the people themselves.

The second division, which went to attack Fort Ticonderoga, numbered nearly fifteen thousand, more than six thousand being regular British troops, and nine thousand colonial volunteers, chiefly brave young men from New England. Two generals commanded it, one being an incapable commander named Abercromby, and the other a brave young nobleman—Lord Howe, whom Wolfe called the best soldier in the British army. The defenders of the fort were few in number, but they fought under the best general of New France—the brave Montcalm. At the commencement of the siege, Lord Howe was killed in a skirmish, and this great loss, along with the blunders of Abercromby, ruined the whole enterprise; though the British troops—English and Highlanders—fought most gallantly, the Highlanders showing all the courage of their ancestors at Culloden. But the British forces were repulsed with

heavy loss, and Abercromby at once ordered a hasty retreat, leaving on the field two thousand dead or wounded, to the great dismay of the colonial volunteers.

Shortly after this, however, these last were greatly encouraged by the taking of Fort Frontenac by Colonel Bradstreet, which not only gave the British the command of Lake Ontario, but also a large quantity of supplies intended for Fort Duquesne, on the Ohio. A brave young colonial colonel, who afterwards became famous as George Washington, had long been desirous of attacking this stronghold of the French, and Pitt was determined that it must now be taken. Very soon he had in Philadelphia a large body of British soldiers, among them twelve hundred Highlanders, ready to fight in their tartan kilts, side by side with the red-coated "Royal Americans" of Pennsylvania, and the southern volunteers, in their rough hunting-dress.

The British General Forbes had a hard task before him in leading his men across the forest-clad Alleghanies, through a wilderness haunted by roving Indians, while he himself was tortured by a severe and fatal disease. He managed, however, to secure a friendly footing with the Indian tribes, and in spite of the unfortunate defeat of part of his force by the way, he succeeded in discouraging the French so completely that when his troops arrived at Fort Duquesne, they found it left in ruins and the place deserted. The gallant Forbes, who lived only a few months longer, set to work at once to fortify the post, and the stockaded camp of soldiers and traders. Afterwards this site of a great city received the name of Pittsburg, in honour of the great leader at home.

These important conquests changed the whole situation, and the following year, 1758, brought still greater success. Early in spring, Pitt sent out another army under Wolfe, who had gone to England for a short rest, and had been made Major-General; though, being yet but thirty-three, he was to hold this rank only in the field. Wolfe's orders were to besiege and take Quebec, and this was no easy task; for it was strongly fortified, both by nature and art, and brave Montcalm, who had driven back the British force from Ticonderoga, was determined to do his best to save Quebec for France.

The story of the great siege of Quebec has been often told. When the white sails of the British fleet of frigates and sloops approached Quebec, carrying a large body of British troops, Wolfe found the line of shore, for miles below the city, bristling with batteries and earthworks, and an army of sixteen thousand men in possession of the place. As time passed, it was plain that Montcalm was bent on wearing out the patience of the besiegers by simply holding a position which, he believed, was too strong to take by assault. But Wolfe knew that General Amherst was moving against Ticonderoga, and he hoped that Montcalm would be obliged to send away some of his troops to help them. In the meantime, he made several attempts to land his men; but the French position was too strong. He landed them, however, on the opposite shore, and seized the heights of Levis. From his batteries there, as well as from his ships, he could cannonade the town. The British shells fired the Cathedral and crashed into the houses, until most of the townspeople had to take refuge in the country; and though

the French batteries blazed away in return, they did little harm. Montcalm tried more than once the plan of sending burning fire-ships to destroy the British fleet, but the English tars were too quick with their grappling-irons, and towed them safely out of the way.

Again and again, Wolfe anxiously studied the long lines of forts and batteries, hoping to find some weak point to attack. But if he began to feel discouraged, so did the French defenders of the place. Sad news, indeed, for them soon arrived. Ticonderoga and Niagara were both taken by the British troops. Many of the French volunteers had now become very tired of the siege. They had been obliged to leave their little farms to the care of old men and children, and harvest-time was nigh. Many slipped away to their fields, and Montcalm, seeing the difficulty of keeping them against their will, gave permission to two thousand to leave the city. Besides this, Quebec was now full of sick and wounded men; but, dark as things seemed for the present, the French felt sure that the city itself could not be taken.

On his side, Wolfe himself was ill and wellnigh in despair. For the active measures that were so necessary seemed at present impossible, with nearly the whole force of New France arrayed against him. At last, almost as a forlorn hope, he devised a bold plan. He had found a spot where the heights could be climbed—at a short distance from the city; and he decided to send a hundred and fifty picked men to try the chance. If they should succeed in mounting, and making a stand at the top, the rest of his army could quickly follow. But if the French should be there in force suffi-

cient to drive them back, he would give up the siege and embark the army for home.

The gallant spirit of both officers and men rose at once to the enterprise. On the night of the twelfth of September, nearly five thousand troops were collected on the south shore of the river opposite the little bay, now called Wolfe's Cove, where a rough narrow "trail" wound its way up the height. About two o'clock in the morning, the tide began to turn, and the long procession of boats, filled with soldiers, began to drift down from his ships, under the starlight. Wolfe himself was in the foremost boat, and, as it glided silently on with muffled oars, he repeated, in a low voice, Gray's "Elegy in a Country Churchyard," then recently written. When he had finished the last verse of the beautiful poem, he said,—“Gentlemen, I would rather have written that poem than take Quebec!” Perhaps he felt it might be true for him that “The paths of glory lead but to the grave,” for he did not expect to survive the battle before him.

The strong flow of the tide drew the boats a little below the right landing-place, but the troops, scrambling ashore, did not stop to look for it. Twenty-four stalwart volunteers led the way, climbing up by trees and bushes, as they best could, with their muskets slung on their backs. Quickly they gained the height, and presently a few shots and the loud British “Hurrah!” told Wolfe, down below, that so far all was well. The rest of the hundred and fifty chosen men speedily followed—Wolfe, in spite of his weakness, clambering with the others; finding, when they reached the top, that the French sentries had fled at once, leaving their officer a captive.

The advance party soon cleared away the defences of the winding path, by which the long files of soldiers could ascend with little difficulty, while the boats went back for more, until the whole army was landed. Wolfe quickly set it in battle array to meet that of Montcalm, from the side of the city, knowing also that another body of French troops might at any moment appear from the opposite direction, where they had been watching Wolfe's ships. Montcalm had been taken by surprise, after an anxious night spent in watching a threatened attack from some of the British ships below the town. The sound of cannon above it alarmed him, and when daylight came, he spurred on his black steed and galloped across the rear of the town, till he came in sight of the Plains of Abraham, just beyond it. And there, to his amazement, he saw the long red lines of the British army drawn up in order of battle!

The surprise was complete. Montcalm hastily summoned his troops, but, though these far outnumbered the British forces, he could not collect them all on such short notice, and the incapable French Governor, Vaudreuil, did not support him as he should have done. Montcalm saw, however, that he must fight Wolfe at once, and he rode gallantly along his mustered lines, waving his sword, and exhorting his men to do their duty to their country. Wolfe, on his part, was doing the same, and his orders were better obeyed.

The French troops advanced after their fashion, with loud shouts, dashing wildly at the thin red ranks that moved quietly on for a space, and then stood still, without firing a shot, till, at their General's word of command, their joint volley rang out like a single

cannon-shot. The French ranks gave way before that deadly fire, and then the English troops charged with their swords, and the Highlanders with their "claymores," till the French—brave as they were—could not stand before their onset. It was cruel work, but war is always cruel. Wolfe was struck by three shots, at the very moment of his well-earned victory. "It's all over with me!" he said at once, as he was raised by some of his men. Some one exclaimed—"They run!" He asked, "Who run?" When he was told that it was the French who ran, he gave orders that a regiment should be sent to bar the retreat; and then exclaimed—"Now God be praised! I die in peace!"

Montcalm, bravely fighting to the last, was borne back with the rush of the flying troops. As he neared the town, he too was struck down by a shot. Two men held him up on his horse till he could be carried into a house, but he died that night—"happy," as he said, "that he should not live to see the surrender of Quebec." The victory was complete, and decided the fate of New France, as well as of Quebec. The British General Murray held the place gallantly through the severe winter, and—a year after the taking of Quebec—the French Governor Vaudreuil gave up French Canada to the British Commanders.

When the news of Wolfe's victory reached New England, the people were overjoyed. Thanksgiving services were held in the churches, and one young minister named Mayhew foretold that, in another century or two, British America would grow into a mighty empire—to which he added that he did not mean an independent one. In old England the people, who had been almost in despair, went wild with joy

and the country blazed with bonfires. But there was sorrow, too, for the hero cut off in his prime, and for the widowed mother, bereft of her devoted son.

Britain did him honour by a splendid monument in Westminster Abbey, which preserves the memory of his courage and his services to his country. And, on a terrace just above the harbour of Quebec, near the site of Champlain's old fort, there stands a stately column erected by a British Governor, inscribed to the joint memory of the two brave Generals—Wolfe and Montcalm; to whom, says the Latin inscription, "Fate gave a common death, history a common fame, and those who came after, a common monument."

CHAPTER XLIII

THE BIRTH OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

1760-1792

IN the year following the taking of Quebec, George II died ; and as his son Prince Frederick had died before him, his grandson became King George III. The English people were glad that he was not a German, like the two Georges before him, but born and brought up an Englishman. He was a good man, so far as he saw, and a good husband and father, but he did not turn out a good king. For he was neither well-educated nor wise ; and his dull mind was as much set on having his own way as any Stuart had been. His mother—the Princess of Wales—used to bid him to “ be King ” when he should come to the throne, meaning that he should rule just as he pleased, instead of following the advice of the “ wise men ” sent to Parliament to represent the people according to what we now call the “ British Constitution.” By acting in this way he made great mistakes, which, in the end, caused the loss of a large portion of the great empire over which he was called to reign.

For Britain had now become greater in extent and power than any of the countries with which she had



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been fighting in Europe. Her empire already stretched far to east and west, over a large portion of India, and the greater part of North America. It was indeed a magnificent realm, and its greatness was in no small degree due to the force and enthusiasm of "the Great Commoner," who had, by his own courage and patriotism put new life into his disheartened country.

But the King did not like Pitt, for he wanted the chief place for himself. And as the old Jacobites, who believed in the supreme power of the King, had now settled down into Tories, and as many votes in Parliament could now be bought for some reward to the voters, the King succeeded in getting Pitt out of power. The King and many of the people wanted to put an end to the Seven Years' War at any cost. But Pitt knew that France and Spain were preparing to attack England again, and he desired still to stand by England's ally, Frederick the Great, who would help England to resist them. But his advice was not taken, and he was obliged to resign the high office he had filled so long and so nobly. The great body of the English were much grieved at this, while many Frenchmen thought it was "worth two victories to France." Britain was very soon forced to fight again with Spain; but four years after the taking of Quebec the Peace of Paris was made, which settled matters for a time. In this France agreed to give up to Britain all her North American possessions, and all attempts to interfere with them.

If Pitt could still have guided the helm of State, all might now have gone well. But though he was more than once asked by the King to be again Prime Minister, Pitt knew that he would not then find enough

support to enable him to do what he felt to be his duty. The King preferred to have Ministers who would do just what he wanted, and neither he nor they understood the dangers into which they were running. First there was a quarrel about the "freedom of the Press," which made a good deal of disturbance, until it was finally settled that the newspapers had the right to say whatever was thought about the affairs of the Empire.

But the quarrel which now arose between England and the colonies in America was much more serious, and had very unhappy results. The colonists there had now nothing more to fear from the French, whom they had helped the British troops to conquer; and they felt that they had a great country and a great future. They had always managed their own affairs as the English at home managed theirs; and as many of their forefathers had left Britain for freedom's sake, they prized it even more than did the English at home. Britain had been very useful to the colonies, in protecting them from their French foes, and the colonies had been very useful to Britain in making its merchants rich through the trade that they were not allowed to carry on with any other country. The northern colonies had timber, grain, codfish and other things that Britain wished to buy, and the southern ones had their tobacco, rice and sugar; while they all needed the goods that Britain had to sell, because her nine or ten millions of people made many more useful articles than they required at home. And so it came to pass that many of the English people, who had never seen America, thought of the colonies much as the East India traders did of India—as a possession that brought

money into Britain. And they did not realize that the colonists were Englishmen like themselves, with the same high spirit and truly English love of freedom.

The Seven Years' War, as well as other British wars, had cost an immense sum of money ; and when the Peace of Paris was settled, the national debt of Britain was a hundred and forty millions of pounds, or about seven hundred million dollars. The English people had now to pay very heavy taxes, and as a large part of the war expenses had been incurred for the defence of the American colonies, it seemed only right that they should pay part of it. No doubt the colonies would have thought so too, if their consent had been asked, or if they had been left to tax themselves as they thought best. But the King and his Ministers never thought of doing this, but got the British Parliament to pass the " Stamp Act," to compel the colonists to buy British stamps for all their written agreements or receipts. This was a small matter, and the people would not have grudged the *amount* of the tax. But—as we have seen—Englishmen had always claimed, as a part of their freedom, the right of taxing themselves from the times of King John and of Earl Simon. And in the case of the colonies, this right had never been interfered with before, and all their Assemblies (or Parliaments) agreed in opposing what they thought an invasion of their rights. They sent over to England the famous Benjamin Franklin, who, from being a Philadelphia printer, had grown into a learned man of science. He explained their complaint to the British Government ; and had Pitt been Prime Minister then, the Stamp Act would never have been passed. But the King's advisers would not pay any attention to

Franklin, unless he could promise for the colonies that they would tax themselves, and this he had no authority to do. But if the leaders on both sides could have sat round a table, and talked matters over, a way might have been found out of the difficulty.

When the news reached America that the Stamp Act had really been passed, the spirit of the old Puritans awoke in the colonies. The northern and the southern colonies made a united protest—Massachusetts and Virginia leading the way. As soon as Pitt had recovered from the illness which had kept him away from Parliament, he declared that—"this kingdom has no right to tax the colonies," and that he rejoiced that they had resisted. And so strong was the protest made by him and by Edmund Burke, the great Irish orator, that the Stamp Act was repealed (or taken back) by Parliament ; though, at the time, it was also declared that the British Parliament had supreme power over the colonies in all things, which the colonists did not believe.

About this time "the Great Commoner" was made Earl of Chatham, and thus taken out of the House of Commons ; and, before long, he had to give up his public duties on account of severe illness. In his absence the King's Ministers had a quarrel with Massachusetts about some taxes placed upon goods sent to the colonies for sale. This made the colonists give up buying British cloth. The men wore rough home-made suits, and the women bought no more silk or fine woollen dresses. The English weavers did not like this, and at length all the duties were taken off, except that on tea. But the people then refused to buy tea, taxed against their will ! The women

drank tea made from the leaves of various shrubs, though it did not taste much like the tea brought from China.

Meantime George Washington in Virginia was trying to keep the people as loyal to Britain as he himself was, and hoped that the trouble might yet pass by. But the King and his Minister, Lord North, were determined to force the colonists to buy the taxed tea, and sent some ship-loads of it to different ports. But the people would not buy it, and the ships dared not go back. At Charleston (Carolina) it was left in damp cellars till it was quite spoiled; and in Annapolis it was at last burned up. Three shiploads lay for some time in Boston Harbour. A great meeting of seven thousand people was at length held in the "Old South Church" there, because there was no hall large enough to hold them. They agreed to send one of the owners of the ships to the English Governor, to ask him to send the tea back to England. But when he came back to say that this was refused, a gentleman named Samuel Adams rose and said—"This meeting can do nothing more to save the country!" Then a mob of forty or fifty men at the door, disguised like Indians, set up a war-whoop, and rushed straight to the wharf, where they boarded the ships and threw three hundred and forty chests of tea into the water. This was called "the Boston Tea-party," and took place about a week before Christmas, which must have been a very anxious one for Boston, where the King had thus been defied.

When the news reached the King and his Government they were very angry with the colonies, especially with Massachusetts. They at once took away the

rights it possessed as a free colony, and closed the harbour, forbidding vessels to go in or out, unless they brought wool or provisions, and in that case they had to stop at a port thirty miles from Boston, and take on board a custom-house officer. This almost ruined the trade of Boston; but the other colonies did what they could to help, and sent by land gifts of grain and sheep and fish and rice and iron, with money for the poor people thrown out of work. In England Lord Chatham, who had now recovered, spoke strongly against the Government's action; and Edmund Burke eloquently argued that Boston should not be singled out for acting as the other colonies had done; and that all its people should not be made to suffer for the rash deed of a few, which had been greatly condemned and deplored by many of its loyal people. But King George refused to give way. "Now," he said, "the die is cast!—The colonies must either triumph or submit! If *we* are resolute, they will be very meek." But meekness had never been the way of the English race in such circumstances; and the King little dreamed how much suffering his obstinacy would bring upon both sides, and how soon the dearly bought "triumph" would be on the side of the colonies.

These latter had, indeed, many differences with each other, but they were now all united in resisting oppression, and Massachusetts naturally led the way, and called out the militia (or volunteers) for service. Yet many, especially in Virginia, still hoped for better tidings from Britain, where the merchants generally, and especially the city of London, were begging for peace measures, and Chatham and Burke were trying to persuade the Parliament to do justice to the colonists

and recall the troops already ordered out. But the King and his counsellors were too proud to go back, and what has been called the "American Revolution" was the consequence.

Warlike preparations were at once begun by the colonists, though the people in Britain would not believe that men who had been peaceful farmers and traders would dare to face well-trained British troops. But they forgot how much these had learned from the British soldiers with whom they had fought side by side at Louisbourg and Ticonderoga; sad as it was that they should have to turn their arms against them now. It was at Lexington in Massachusetts, in April 1771, that the first shot was fired that "echoed round the world," in a skirmish between a small British force and a few Massachusetts militiamen. There was some more fighting at Concord, close by, in which men were killed and wounded on both sides. The country was roused in all directions, and within a month fifteen thousand New England volunteers were collected round Boston. In June a sharp conflict at Bunker's Hill proved how bravely the colonists could fight, for though they were driven back from their position there, more than a thousand British soldiers were left dead or wounded on the field, while the colonists lost only half that number. There was great dismay in England when this news arrived, for it was a long time since Britain had lost so many men in any one battle!

Colonel George Washington, who had fought so well at the taking of Fort Duquesne, and who had tried, till now, to keep peace with Britain, was chosen General of the colonial forces. He came from Virginia

to Boston, in July, and stood under an old Cambridge elm, long called by his name, to take command of the great untrained multitude that could hardly yet be called an army. He was a fine-looking man of forty-two, stately and calm, as well as gentle in his manner, and with a truly brave and noble nature. His loyal heart shrank from the idea of separating the colonies from Great Britain ; and he hoped that as soon as the King saw that the colonists were able to stand up for their rights, a satisfactory settlement would be agreed on. The volunteers were very poorly equipped, though the General wore the blue and buff uniform of a Virginia officer, with a black cockade in his shovel hat. But the volunteers were dressed in all sorts of clothes, —the New England men in their old faded coats or shirt-sleeves, the Virginians in their brown linen hunting-suits, with the words—“ Liberty or Death ! ” worked on their breasts. They had very few tents in all the camps ; so that most of the men had to build for themselves little huts of turf or stones or boards, for shelter. Food was poor and scarce, and there was great lack of powder.

There were still in Massachusetts many people loyal to Britain, who yet, like Washington, hoped for peace, and refused to fight against their old flag. But when General Howe, the British commander, took his troops away from Boston by sea, early the next spring, nearly twelve hundred Loyalists, as they were called, went with the fleet to Halifax, few of whom ever returned. For, by this time, most of the colonists had made up their minds, instead of remaining British subjects, to have a republic of their own, to which the Loyalists were quite opposed. And there

were so many hard feelings and hard words on both sides, that some of them had to escape from angry mobs, leaving all they had behind them. For when people are stirred up by passion, they do not stop to think of other people's rights.

On the fourth of July, 1776, the famous Declaration of Independence was adopted by the Congress (or Parliament) of the thirteen colonies, when it was solemnly declared that "the United Colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and independent States," and that "all political connexion between them and the State of Great Britain is and ought to be at an end." And—after that—there was very little chance that they would ever go back. For even Washington, who had "hated the idea of independence" now expressed his belief that "nothing else will serve us!"

So far, indeed, neither side had met with much success in their warfare. For the British troops had been defeated in an attempt to take Charleston, and an expedition from New England against Canada, under Arnold and Montgomery, had entirely failed—Montgomery being killed by a shot in trying to scale the steep rock of Quebec. But the British Government made a great mistake in bringing a large body of German soldiers, called "Hessians," to increase their forces, because many of the British soldiers and some of the officers did not care to fight against their old comrades of twenty years before. And Burgoyne—one of the British generals—invited the savage Indians to join in the warfare. When Chatham heard of these things, he exclaimed in Parliament—"If I were an American, as I am an Englishman, while a

foreign troop was landed in my country I never would lay down my arms—never—never ! *never !*”

Howe's fine army, however, was successful towards the south, and drove Washington and his men from New Jersey into wretched winter-quarters at Valley Forge on the Schuylkill river, where they endured a winter of hardship and suffering. Food, clothing and blankets were scarce. For lack of the last the men used often to sit up all night beside their fires, to keep warm, while the officers sometimes used old bed-coverings for overcoats, and even the sick had sometimes to lie on the bare ground for lack of straw. As they had no horses, the fire-wood and provisions had to be drawn on sledges by the men, many of whom had worn out their shoes, so that their bleeding feet left tracks in the snow. Some gallant officers who had come from foreign lands to help the colonists, for the sake of freedom, such as the famous Kosciusko from Poland, and the French Lafayette, fared no better than the rest ; and the latter called his abode “ no gayer than a dungeon.” Meanwhile the British troops had no such hardships to endure, being snugly quartered in the comfortable houses of rich Philadelphia. Yet Washington, whose noble spirit alone kept his poor starved soldiers from despair, was sometimes blamed by Congress for not at once making them into an irresistible body of men.

But they were soon greatly encouraged by hearing of a victory of the New England militiamen over the British and Hessian troops under Burgoyne, who, after some doubtful battles, was surrounded by the army of General Gates at Saratoga, and was forced to surrender his whole army of more than five thousand men. This



WILLIAM PITT, EARL OF CHATHAM.

was bad news for Britain, arriving there at the very time when Chatham was making a last effort to keep the empire together by urging that Britain should offer to the colonists the same sort of government by themselves that nearly all British colonies now enjoy. But even then this plan was rejected, through the obstinacy of the King, and the weakness of Lord North.

But it was probably too late for this, for just after the news of the defeat of Saratoga, came that of an alliance between France and the American colonies. Then even Lord North was frightened into offering to give up all the British demands that had caused the war. Lord Chatham, weak and suffering from his last illness, was called back to power, in the hope that he might yet save the colonies to the Empire. But it was now, indeed, too late, and he was already dying ! Almost the last words of this noble Englishman were a protest against the dismemberment of this great and noble monarchy, which "seventeen years before, had been a terror to the world." The agitation of the occasion was too much for him, and he was carried fainting from the House of Lords to his home—to die !

Britain was now, indeed, "splendidly alone" in the midst of foes, for Spain was allied with France against her. But the brave English spirit which Chatham had roused would not give way to despair. Britain's fleets still triumphed at sea, and her brave General Elliott held the Rock of Gibraltar through a three years' siege ; while, as we have seen, Clive and Hastings were extending and strengthening her Indian Empire. But the end of the war in America came as a crushing calamity to the British nation, when the whole

army under General Cornwallis was caught in Virginia between the French fleet in Chesapeake Bay, and the army of Washington and Lafayette, sixteen thousand strong, half of whom were Frenchmen. The defences Cornwallis had raised were battered down by the artillery, and as nearly half his force of seven thousand men had been too much weakened by sickness and starvation to hold out longer, Cornwallis was forced to surrender both his men and his ships.

When this fatal tidings reached England, Lord North, in despair, exclaimed that "All was over!" and resigned his office. The King was overwhelmed, as he well might be. This sad war, however, did not come to an end till two years after that, during which Britain still held New York, Charleston and Savannah—lasting altogether nearly seven years—costing Britain a hundred million pounds and fifty thousand lives, besides the loss of the colonies themselves. France and Spain were at the same time threatening India and Gibraltar, and the Irish Parliament wished to throw off any interference from the British one. But the last trouble was—as we have seen—removed, later, by the peaceful union of the two Parliaments. Admiral Rodney made Britain victorious in Europe, and in 1783 an honourable peace was agreed on by Parliament, which, however, gave up all claim to the revolted colonies. These now took their place among the nations, as the United States of America, which, if lost to Britain, are at least a vigorous and worthy offshoot of the nation from which it sprang.

But though Britain had thus to give up, to her own brave descendants, a large part of North America, she also kept a much larger and more valuable part

of it than any one then realized ; for the vast country we now know by the name of Canada was then unexplored, and this, with Newfoundland, was still her own. At that time, the province called Canada was mainly a long strip of country, chiefly stretching along the shores of the River St. Lawrence. This had been called New France, and was still peopled by French Canadians, to whom Britain had given fair treatment, and just laws, when they were conquered some twenty years before, and who were therefore peaceful and content.

As has been already said, there were many brave and honest men in the United Colonies who had remained loyal to the British flag, and who had refused to join the rest of the people in fighting for independence. As each side thought the conduct of the other treason, feeling grew hotter as the war went on ; and some of the States made very harsh laws against the "Loyalists," seizing all their property and even hanging a few as traitors. These Loyalists are said to have numbered about a third of the colonists, and to have possessed more than a third of the wealth of the country. But many of them lost all, and were obliged to leave their homes and their property, and take refuge in the still unsettled province of Canada. Some went by sea to Nova Scotia, and remained there ; and others travelled hundreds of miles, across hills and through great forests, and settled down to make new homes in the wilderness. Upper Canada—now the Province of Ontario—was first settled by these steady and faithful people, who have ever since kept up their traditions as United Empire Loyalists and become the foundation-stone of British Canada.

The British Government made generous compensation for the losses they had suffered, by giving them grants of land on which to settle. But it was long before their new homes could be like those they had left for love of Britain ; and for years they had many hardships to undergo. Ten years after the long war was ended, Colonel Simcoe—an English officer—was sent out as British Governor of Upper Canada, and summoned his first Council to meet in what is now the city of Kingston, close to the site where the Lily flag of France had so long waved over old Fort Frontenae. This may be called the first real beginning of the great Dominion of Canada.

CHAPTER XLIV

THE SECOND PITT AND LORD NELSON

1783-1805

JUST at the time when Britain was in distress for the loss of her great American colonies, young William Pitt, son of Lord Chatham, was elected to Parliament. As we have seen, he was born in the same year with Wilberforce, the year of the taking of Quebec, shortly after Clive's victory at Plassey. His father had carefully watched over his education, and at Cambridge his mind had been stored with knowledge and high ideals. He took his place at once as the "first man in Parliament," and at twenty-two became Chancellor of the Exchequer. At twenty-five he attained the honour of being Prime Minister of Britain, the youngest Premier Britain has had, and the only great son who has ever succeeded a great father in that office. He was destined to guide Britain through one of the most anxious times in her history, and proved himself one of her greatest statesmen. Though he did not possess his father's strong glowing eloquence and keen insight, his speeches and his measures were guided by clear good sense, patriotism and firm self-control. And while he loved England as much as his father had done, he had more feeling for other countries, believing that

the real welfare of each is bound up with that of the rest, and that the true greatness of the British Empire ought to lie in being a blessing to the rest of the world.

Pitt did great things for Britain, and tried to do more ; but some of his great plans were checked by unexpected events which delayed them till later times. One of these was a needed improvement or " reform " in the election of members of Parliament. England had changed so much as to its towns, since trade and manufactures had greatly increased, that the Parliament did not now properly represent the people. For many of the old boroughs which elected members had now only a few houses and people left in them, and sometimes none ; while many new towns that had grown up during the last six hundred years had no members at all. Then the men who owned the land of such deserted boroughs often expected to be rewarded in some way for electing members who would support the party in power, and this caused a great deal of bribery, or " corruption " as it is called, often preventing good government and bringing the nation into great trouble. It was indeed one of the causes that had led to the loss of the American colonies, for, of course, the men who were sent to Parliament in this way cared chiefly for what would benefit themselves and their friends, and thought very little about the wishes or the good of the people in general. Mr. Pitt early prepared a Bill for Parliament to change this wrong system, but though he persuaded the King not to oppose it, he could not get the House of Commons to take it up, and, though much disappointed, many things happened to prevent his bringing it forward again. However he himself did his utmost to manage

public affairs honestly and uprightly, scorning the idea of taking rewards for doing his duty to his country, and guiding Britain's destinies for eighteen years in a noble spirit, which made all men look up to him as a true leader.

At the close of the century—as has been told—he succeeded in bringing to Ireland the end of more than a century of misrule, discontent and repeated rebellion from which that country had suffered since the time of James II. It was now settled that Ireland should become closely united with Great Britain and send its members to Westminster, instead of Dublin, thus having a voice in the laws for the whole nation. The Irish people could then sell their woollen or linen goods freely to England, which greatly helped their trade and manufactures. Old oppressive laws and taxation were relaxed, and the people began to be better taught, as well as better fed.

Pitt also brought about an important change in the government of Britain's East Indian possessions, by bringing them under the rule of Parliament, instead of a trading Company; and he established free trade with France, which stopped much smuggling and promoted Britain's trade and prosperity in other ways, so that its wealth was greatly increased. But his great plans were sadly interfered with, by the alarming events now occurring in France, which we call the "French Revolution."

In a former chapter mention was made of a tour in France that young Pitt made with his friend Wilberforce, soon after they entered Parliament. This no doubt led him to take a warm interest in France, England's nearest neighbour, against which many

English people at that time had a great prejudice, because of the long wars between the two countries. And just then many thoughtful Frenchmen were considering how the state of their country could be made better and more free.

Scarcely any of the countries of Europe possessed, at that time, anything like the national freedom which the British people had so hardly won. In France, the peasants and other working people were very poor and often very miserable. In much earlier times the people had been as free as the Saxons, but selfish kings had long forced on it tyranny and bad government. The priests and the nobles held themselves quite separate from the rest of the nation and kept the poor in great ignorance, caring little for their welfare. The nobles refused to be taxed, so that the poorer people had to find all the money for the wars and other heavy expenses, while often treated like slaves by the proud nobles, most of whom cared little how others fared, so that they themselves could live in grand castles and revel in magnificence and luxury.

At the time when the American colonists were fighting for independence, the "wise men" of France were thinking and dreaming much about freedom, and a state of things in which all men should feel like brothers, as they ought to do. It was because of this that Benjamin Franklin was able to persuade the French people and the French Government to give assistance to the new Republic. And when the soldiers and sailors came home from fighting in America they were filled with the idea of having a republic in France.

Louis XVI, who was then King of France, was a much better and kinder man than those who had ruled

France just before him, and he really desired to make things better for his people. For this purpose he called together the "States General," a sort of Parliament, which had not met for more than seventy years; and most of the members wished to secure laws which would have made France as free as Britain. But there were many disputes between the nobles and princes and the rest of those present, who made up the majority, and soon called themselves the "National Assembly," which wanted to go too fast for the rest, for, as we have seen, it had taken a long time for Britain to secure its free government.

The French King still thought himself supreme, and his counsellors did not give him good counsel; and when he refused to agree to certain changes wanted by the Assembly and a wise Minister named Necker was banished, there was a great riot in Paris. Thousands of people collected together, drove off the troops that tried to disperse them, and marched to a great gloomy prison called the Bastille, where, just as in the Tower of London, many people had been unjustly imprisoned. Overcoming the garrison, they seized this fortress and levelled its walls with the ground. When this news came to the ears of the great Whig leader, Charles James Fox, he exclaimed joyfully that it was "the greatest event that had ever happened." But the Irish orator Burke was not so sure as to its effects, for he wrote to a friend that "whenever a separation is made between liberty and justice, neither is safe," meaning that true freedom is not to be attained through lawless violence, and the events which followed proved the wisdom of these words.

Immediately after the taking of the Bastille, a large

body of militia was formed, called the National Guard, who wore cockades of three colours (tricolor), red, blue and white, the first two being the colours of Paris, and the white that of the Royal House. About this time, the French princes and many of the nobles had left France in order to procure help in other countries to overpower the people. The danger of this made them more and more excited, and riots began to break out in Paris and throughout the country, where the peasants began to burn down castles and convents. On the fourth of August, 1789, the Assembly tried to pacify the people by putting an end to all the privileges which the clergy and the nobles had possessed since the old feudal times, and proclaiming equality of laws for all the people. This one act changed the whole state of affairs in France.

Much anger was aroused in Paris when the people found that the King was collecting fresh troops at Versailles, and that some of the officers had trampled the tricolor cockades under foot, and the mob grew much excited and enraged. Early in October a great crowd of men and women, shouting for bread, marched out to the splendid palace of Versailles, and forced the King and Queen to return with them to Paris and remain at the Tuileries Palace there. In the following July there was a great celebration of the taking of the Bastille the year before, when an immense multitude of people from all parts of France marched in procession to the Champ de Mars with bands of music and waving tricolor banners. And there, at an altar set up in the middle of the great square, Lafayette, in the name of the National Guard, the President of the Assembly in the name of its Members, and the King himself,

solemnly swore to maintain the new laws or Constitution of France. And the beautiful Queen, Marie Antoinette, raising her little son in her arms, declared that he joined with her in the same desire. And for the time everybody seemed pleased and happy, not knowing of the hard times yet to come.

But the King was perplexed among his different advisers, and made an unfortunate mistake in trying to escape from Paris with his family, which, the people believed, meant that he wished to put himself at the head of the princes who were trying to bring foreign troops to restore the old order. He was stopped on his way and brought back ; and there was a great riot of the people who wished to dethrone him. As the mob would not obey the order to disperse, Lafayette, by command of the Assembly, ordered the National Guard to fire on them. Blood was shed, and a breach was made between the people who wanted a republic and those who were true to the Constitution that had been proclaimed.

But though the King had solemnly accepted the latter, and begged the Emperor of Austria to refrain from any interference on his behalf, which would only bring ruin to his throne, it seemed impossible to prevent further trouble. And when the Duke of Brunswick, commanding a Prussian army, threatened to destroy Paris, unless the King should have all his old privileges restored, the great mob of Paris, which now called itself "the Commune," came together one August night, at the sound of the "tocsin" or great alarm bell. The excited multitude marched to the Palace of the Tuileries, killed all the brave Swiss Guards, who would not forsake the duty they were pledged to

fulfil, and forced the King and his family to seek the protection of the Assembly. Soon after that, they were all shut up in prison, while the Commune undertook to rule the city. But when the news came that a town named Verdun had been taken by the Prussian army, fighting for the King, the black flag was unfurled from the tower of the great Church of Nôtre Dame, cannon thundered hourly, and hired assassins forced their way into the prisons and murdered the prisoners, who had been sent there for taking the part of the King. About the same time a victory for France was gained over the advancing Austrian Army, and a republic was proclaimed on September 22, 1792.

One of the first acts of the new republic was to put the King on trial on a charge of having joined in plots against the public liberty, and though he was eloquently defended by a famous Frenchman named Malesherbes, he was found guilty, and condemned to death. In the following January he was beheaded in a great square in Paris, meeting his fate as bravely as Charles I had met his. The deed has been well called "a political crime, committed in the name of liberty," and sent a thrill of horror throughout Europe.

The violent leaders of the "Commune" now took things into their own hands, and for nearly a year there reigned in Paris a time of frightful tyranny, called the "Reign of Terror," headed by a fierce and cruel man named Robespierre. The prisons were filled with more than 200,000 prisoners, many of whom were sent there simply because they belonged to noble families. A great scaffold was set up on one of the public squares, on which numbers of these prisoners were beheaded

every day by a machine called the guillotine, and a great crowd of people used to go to see this sad sight, as if it were a show. Among these victims was the hapless Queen, Marie Antoinette, and some of the noblest and wisest French men and women. One of these was Madame Roland, a brave and noble lady, who had desired to see France freed from its old tyranny but who hated the crimes committed in the name of liberty.

All former ideas of right and order were now for a time upset. Divine worship was no longer held in the churches, there was no observance of our Sunday of rest, and, instead of weeks, the time was divided into periods of ten days. The names of the months were all changed, and the years were ordered to be numbered from the beginning of the Republic. Still more cruel laws were made ; and the guillotine went on doing its deadly work. But such a state of things could not last long. At last the people rose against the Commune itself, Robespierre and his followers suffered the same death they had decreed to so many others, and the Assembly once more governed France under a small Council of five, called the " Directory."

The horror which all these events had aroused in Britain, as in other countries, had greatly interfered with the plans of Mr. Pitt for reforming the House of Commons, for many good people there, seeing how far things had gone in France as soon as changes had begun, were now afraid of making the smallest change, and some, led by Burke, would have liked to stir up a crusade against France. But Pitt thought that France should be left to manage her own affairs, and tried hard to keep the two countries at peace. Then the French leaders on their side were angry because England

being free herself, did not help them, and the year after the death of the French King, France declared war against Britain.

For twenty-five years after that time, Britain was forced to be almost constantly at war, and a very serious war it was. For there came to the front in the French army and the French Government, a brave and clever young lieutenant from Corsica, of whom we have all heard as Napoleon Buonaparte. He soon gained so many victories for France, that he was made First Consul, having the highest power in the State. And, as he was very selfish and ambitious, the more power he got the more he wanted, and the more conquests he wished to make. For a time, he seemed to carry everything before him as the British army was just then small and lacking in good generals, though Admiral Howe won a naval victory that gave Britain the mastery at sea, and Pitt did what he could to help the Allied Powers which opposed France in Europe, by sending them large supplies of money for the support of their troops.

For a time Buonaparte continued to gain so much power in Europe that he got the Dutch and Spanish fleets to join the French against England, so that he might be able to send over a great French army to Ireland to start and help a revolt against Britain, with which, as we have seen, it had been peacefully united. But the Dutch fleet was almost destroyed by the British one under Admiral Dundas in the famous naval action at Camperdown. And previous to this, the Spanish fleet had also been worsted in a sea-fight off the coast of Spain, in which our great naval hero, Admiral Nelson, first became famous.



NELSON AS VICE-ADMIRAL OF THE BLUE.

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Horatio Nelson was born about the same time with Pitt and Wilberforce, and had been made a midshipman at eleven. For twenty-five years he had been doing his duty as a brave seaman, and in this victory he greatly distinguished himself. The Spanish fleet had twenty-seven ships, the British only fifteen, but Admiral Jervis bore down so valiantly upon the Spaniards that they were driven back to Cadiz with the loss of four of their finest vessels. And of these two were captured by Nelson, while his own ship, the *Captain*, was almost cut to pieces. A few months later he lost an arm in another battle off Teneriffe, and as he had shortly before lost an eye, he thought that a left-handed and one-eyed Admiral could not be of much use to England, and that he should make room for a better man to serve the State. But in this he was much mistaken, for his greatest deeds were still to be done, and, like Blake, he was destined to come to the rescue of Britain in one of her times of greatest need.

Meanwhile the designs of Napoleon Buonaparte were growing greater and greater. He had begun to think of driving the British power out of India, and took a large French force to conquer Egypt first, as that country lay in the direct way to India ; and this he succeeded in doing, though at a cost which he did not expect. The ships that took his army there were lying in Aboukir Bay, at the mouth of the Nile, when Nelson, who was now an admiral, came up with his fleet. The French vessels were believed to be safe there, for there were strong batteries along the shore to protect them, while the bay was full of shoals and therefore very dangerous. But though it was late in the August evening when the signal for battle was given, the

British fleet kept on its way, careless of the hidden shoals, and under a sharp fire from the enemy, until every ship got closer to the one it was meant to attack. Then its guns broke furiously out, and a fierce battle raged throughout the whole night, lighted up by the fierce red light of burning ships. A shot struck Nelson on the forehead, and tore away a flap of skin, which fell over his seeing eye, and blinded him for the time. He was at once taken below, but when the surgeon came up to attend to him, he cried, "No! No! I will take my turn; see to my brave fellows!"

Just as Nelson returned to the deck a terrible event was happening. The French Admiral's great ship, the *Orient*, had been set on fire by the small British *Bellerophon* which had been fighting it till she herself was a wreck. The great vessel was wrapped in flames, whose red glow lighted up the whole bay, yet, though her crew, saw that the fire must soon reach the powder magazine, they still worked away at their guns, raising cheer after cheer. Nelson, who had been hurried on deck by the fearful glow of the flames, gave orders to send out the British boats to save all the lives they could before the awful explosion should take place. On-board the *Orient* was a little boy, ten years old, named Casabianca, the son of the flag captain, who had bidden him remain where he left him, until he called him away. In the meantime the captain was mortally wounded and lay unconscious on the deck. The ship's officers begged the boy, whom all loved, to come away with them in one of the boats. But he said that he must obey his father and he would not leave him, even when told that he was unconscious and dying; and the boat put out without him. By the lurid light the child was

seen bending over his helpless father, tying him to a piece of a broken spar. Then came the terrible explosion that shook every ship in the harbour, and strewed the sea with fragments of the great French vessel. And as the British boats rowed swiftly about, picking up all the men they could see struggling with the waves, they caught sight of a floating spar, bearing a helpless figure, guided by a little boy swimming beside it. They rowed after him, anxious to save him, but amid the confusion and the darkness they lost sight of the brave little fellow and his precious charge. The English poet, Mrs. Hemans, wrote a poem about this, which most people know. Here are three verses of it :

“The flames rushed on—he would not go
Without his father’s word ;
That father, faint in death below
His voice no longer heard !

“There came a burst of thunder sound ;
The boy—oh, where was he ?
Ask of the winds, that far around
With fragments strewed the sea,

With mast and helm and pennon fair
That well had borne their part,
But the noblest thing that perished there
Was that young, faithful heart !”

In that battle of the Nile, every French ship was taken or destroyed, and the victory brought great joy to the British nation. In return for this signal service to the Empire, the brave Admiral was made Lord Nelson, and received a pension for life of two thousand pounds a year.

Three years later Lord Nelson gained another victory

over the Danish fleet, for Buonaparte had now got Denmark and Sweden to help him against Britain with which they now had a quarrel. The battle was most bravely fought on both sides, and at one time the Admiral who was first in command hoisted the signal for giving up and retiring. Nelson did not believe in doing this, so he put his telescope to his blind eye and declared that he did not see the signal! But as the Danish fire slackened, and one ship blew up, Nelson felt so grieved by the useless slaughter of the brave Danes, that he sent a letter to the Crown Prince, who was in command, asking him to give up the hopeless fight, and agree to a truce; and this humane act made the beginning of a new friendship between Britain and Denmark.

It was some years after this, that Nelson's last and greatest victory over France delivered Britain from a great danger, and made a difference in the history of Europe. In the meantime, a short-lived peace had been made with France, and war had again been declared against Buonaparte and his ambitious designs, because he had now become Emperor of the French and was again planning to invade Britain, his strongest opponent. At Boulogne, just opposite England, on the Straits of Dover, he had collected a great army of a hundred thousand men with an immense fleet of flat-bottomed boats to carry them to the English shores. The nation was terribly excited, and three hundred thousand volunteers mustered and drilled in preparation for a surprise. Beacons (or signal fires) were made ready to light on every hill or cliff, and even the little children were learning to dread the very name of "Boney," as they called the Emperor. Pitt, who had been out of

office for some years, was now recalled to power, as the only man who could save the country, and, though now much weakened by illness, he soon began to secure the help of other countries in fighting the Emperor's growing power, which they were all learning to dread.

Napoleon had got the Spanish fleet to help him, and he came to the great camp at Boulogne, eager to crush the British Channel fleet, before it could be joined by that of Nelson, which was, meantime, chasing the Spanish fleet to the West Indies and back. "Let us be masters of the British Channel for six months," exclaimed Napoleon, "and we shall be masters of the world!"

But before this could be accomplished, Nelson and his fleet met that of France at Cape Trafalgar, on the coast of Spain, on October 21, 1805. Every one has heard the signal which he ran up to his masthead on that day. "England expects every man to do his duty!" And he set a noble example.

The French and Spanish fleets, when united, numbered forty vessels. Nelson had but thirty-one, and of these four were not able to take any part in the fight. But he knew that the only way to save Britain from invasion was to destroy the hostile fleets, and he felt sure that his men could do it. His own vessel, the *Victory*, headed one line of battle-ships, while the other was led by his assistant, Admiral Collingwood, on the *Royal Sovereign*. The latter was a little nearer the enemy than Nelson's line, and got into action first. The *Victory*, with Nelson on board, met a furious rain of shot as she bore down on the enemy. But Nelson ordered his gunners not to fire till they were so near that every shot could do its work. Fifty men were

killed before one fired a shot, but, with her rigging torn to pieces, she dashed into the French line, her guns roaring from both sides of her deck.

The splendid victory was soon won, but Nelson's last and greatest fight was over. An hour after the *Victory* began her attack, the bullet of a French sharpshooter struck him on the shoulder and entered the spine. He knew that all was over, for he said so as they raised him. But the rousing cheers of his crew, as one of the hostile ships after another struck her flag, lighted up with joy the face of the dying hero, and, like Wolfe, in a similar case, he died happy, three hours later, exclaiming—"Thank God! I have done my duty!" The victory was indeed almost complete. More than twenty of the enemy's ships—the number he had hoped for—had been taken, the naval power of France and Spain was destroyed, and Britain had no more need to fear a French invasion. The nation honoured her dead Admiral by a splendid funeral and a fitting monument in St. Paul's Cathedral. His own ship, the *Victory*, could be seen till lately in Portsmouth harbour, a tablet on her deck marking the spot where fell her gallant commander. Now the ship, like the hero, has passed away.

But though Britain was thus saved from invasion, Europe was still in danger from the schemes of Napoleon, who, a month after Trafalgar, won the battle of Austerlitz, over the united armies of Russia and Austria. This greatly disappointed the high hopes raised by the victory of Trafalgar; and Wilberforce afterwards declared that Austerlitz killed Pitt, who died shortly after, worn out by illness and anxiety. Before he died, he told his friends to "roll up the map

of Europe," as Napoleon was bringing about such changes that "for ten years it would not be wanted." He loved Britain to the end, and, full of anxiety for her future, exclaimed, in the last faint words he uttered—"My country! How I leave my country!"

CHAPTER XLV

WELLINGTON AND WATERLOO

1801-1815

THE death of Pitt deprived Britain of a noble leader in one of its darkest hours of danger. But as he had set the example of standing for Britain rather than for any party in it, so now in the struggle with France and its tyrannical Emperor, Whigs and Tories rallied together to sustain their country's arms. The famous Whig leader Fox helped on this union of forces until his death, a few months after that of Pitt, just before Napoleon, in his victory at Jena, overcame the forces of Prussia, the last country on the continent of Europe that had stood out against him. Yet it was during this time of trouble abroad, that the "Grenville Ministry" of Britain, before it went out of power, finally abolished the slave trade, notwithstanding much selfish opposition from those who still wanted to profit by this wicked trade.

Canning, the next leader of the British Government, had been an ardent follower of Pitt, and, inspired by his noble patriotism, he succeeded by his eloquence in rousing the British people, in spite of their discouragement, to keep up the contest against Napoleon. The

“ Corsican Usurper,” as he was often called, had now forced the Emperor of Russia to become his ally ; and was indeed changing the map of Europe. His troops now occupied Prussia ; he had made one brother King of Holland, and carved out of Germany a kingdom for another. Then he made a third, Joseph, King of Naples—joining the rest of Italy to his French Empire. After that, by clever trickery, he managed to get Spain and Portugal into his power. All this, he thought, would make him strong enough to subdue “ obstinate Britain,” which “ splendidly alone ” refused to yield to his power. But as the Irish orator Sheridan then declared, “ he had yet to learn what it is to combat a free people animated by one spirit ” against him !

Britain had never lacked a hero in her time of need, and now Napoleon was to encounter the “ hero of a hundred fights,” who was destined to be his conqueror at last. The great General we now know as the Duke of Wellington was at that time young Sir Arthur Wellesley, and, with another gallant general—Sir John Moore—went to help the brave Spaniards who rose as one man against the bold invaders of their country. The war then begun in the peninsula of Spain and Portugal lasted several years, and was known as the “ Peninsular War.” Wellington was at first successful in forcing the French army in Portugal to surrender, but Napoleon came down upon him with a force of two hundred thousand men, and Spain had to submit. He secured the retreat of his army by the battle of Corunna, at which the brave Sir John Moore was killed, and as we are told, was buried on the ramparts at dead of night, before the troops departed. A poet named Charles Wolfe has written a well-known poem

about this event, of which the last two verses are here quoted.

“No useless coffin enclosed his breast,
Nor in sheet nor in shroud we wound him,
But he lay like a warrior taking his rest
With his martial cloak around him.

Slowly and sadly we laid him down,
From the field of his fame, fresh and gory,
We carved not a line, we raised not a stone,
But we left him alone with his glory!”

But neither Canning nor Wellesley was ready to give up the fight in Spain. Napoleon was then gaining one victory after another in Austria and Holland. The British people, and even the British Government, grew discouraged, but Arthur Wellesley wrote home that “the honour and interest of our country require that we should hold our ground here as long as possible; and, please God, I will maintain it as long as I can!” These patriotic words his firm resolve and skilful generalship more than fulfilled. He increased his force to fifty thousand men, by adding to it Portuguese troops trained by British officers; and though he could not meet the French General Massena on equal terms, he entrenched his troops so strongly along the heights of Torres Vedras, that Massena was compelled to retreat, and at last to give up the attempt to drive the British troops out of Portugal. And this proved to be the turning point which checked Napoleon’s victorious career.

In the spring of 1808 Wellington—as we may now call him—not content with holding narrow, rocky Portugal against the French, determined to drive them out of the two strong frontier fortresses of Ciudad



THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON WHEN SIR ARTHUR WELLESLEY.

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Rodrigo and Badajos, and to besiege the former with forty thousand troops against a French army of double that number. To do this, he had to overcome great difficulties—to drag his guns and stores across trackless hills, to bridge rivers, and make many miles of roads for his eight hundred carts. Ciudad Rodrigo was very strongly fortified, but on the very first night after the siege was opened, a strong redoubt near the ramparts was taken with a dash, and, on the next day, the fortress was stormed and taken, with a loss of 1,300 men and officers, one half of whom fell during the actual assault. The taking of Badajos, soon after, was as daring and successful, though Wellington lost five thousand of his best troops, and in the following July he won a signal victory over the French General Marmont at Salamanca, in which the British loss was again five thousand, while the French loss was far greater. Forty thousand French troops were defeated in forty minutes by Wellington's diminished army, and the French retreat was turned into a rout, in which Napoleon's brother Joseph, then called the King of Spain, also fled from Madrid, with an immense quantity of plunder taken from Spain. Wellington entered Madrid in triumph, and began the siege of Burgos further north, but two French armies from north and south hastened to its relief, and Wellington was forced to retreat to the Portuguese frontier. Two years later, he returned to Spain with an army of ninety thousand men and completely defeated the French troops, driving them across the Pyrenees, out of Spain, thus setting Spain free from her invaders and encouraging the allied forces to stand fast against Napoleon.

Many other important events had, however, occurred while Wellington was firmly holding his ground in Spain. One of these was Napoleon's famous march to Moscow. Puffed up by the victories he had won, the French Emperor, in his pride and arrogance, had fallen out with his former ally, the Emperor of Russia. Just at the time when Wellington was marching to attack Salamanca, Napoleon was setting out with a great army of a hundred thousand men, to subdue Russia, as he had subdued other countries. After the long and toilsome journey, and winning one battle on the way, he and his army entered the old capital city of Moscow in triumph, only to find it a mass of smoking ruins, burned by order of its Russian Governor, who was determined that the French army should find no shelter there. And as the cold Russian winter was close at hand, it would have been impossible to remain without winter quarters, so Napoleon and his army were forced to retreat by the way they had come.

The "Retreat from Moscow" was one of the most miserable events recorded in history. Without sufficient supplies, without horses to carry their guns and baggage, the half-starved soldiers, benumbed by the bitter cold, toiled dolefully over the great frozen plains towards the homes that few of them ever reached. Thousands of them fell exhausted on the snow, only to be slain by the grim Cossacks, as the Russian cavalry were called. Of the vast army that crossed the frontier at the start, only a few thousand ragged and half-starved men came back!

This was for Napoleon the beginning of the end. Europe began to see that he *could* be conquered. Prussia took heart to help her northern neighbours, and although

Napoleon won two more victories in Saxony, they were his last. The French troops had—as we have seen—been driven out of Spain, and in October Napoleon was defeated at Leipsic by the united forces of Russia, Austria and Prussia, and by Wellington's army on the frontier of France. For a few months longer he managed to keep up a desperate struggle with a few raw troops ; but at last, in March, 1814, he was forced to surrender Paris, and resign his rule as Emperor of France.

In the meantime, amidst all these troubles in Europe, Great Britain had—most unhappily—got into a new war with her old Colonies—the new American Republic. During the long war with Napoleon, the British Government—in order to check his growing power—had tried to block the trade of the ports of Europe under his rule ; and he, in turn, tried to block the trade of Britain. And as each tried to prevent ships trading with the other, this bore hardly on the American people, whose trade had greatly increased during these European wars, and whose ships now did most of the business of carrying goods from one country to another. Besides this, Britain claimed the right to search foreign ships for deserters from her fleet ; and as it was not easy to distinguish between British and American sailors, it sometimes happened that men who were really subjects of the United States were taken away by force to serve in British warships. More than six thousand sailors were said to have been seized in this way, and many of these were said to be American subjects. At length a rash British commander fired from his ship—the *Leopard*—on the American vessel *Chesapeake*, to force the surrender of some men said to be deserters, and though this

hasty act was promptly disowned by the British Government as contrary to orders, it was felt as a great grievance by the American people.

The Government of the United States did not wish to go to war with Britain, for they had a very small and untrained army and hardly any navy. And some of the States, especially Massachusetts and Connecticut, refused to give either men or money towards a war. The American Government therefore tried the plan of forbidding American ships to leave American ports, thus stopping all trade between the United States and Europe. But this caused great hardship on both sides of the sea, because Britain could not get the wheat and cotton wanted from America, which had far more of both than was needed ; while both the British and the American people suffered for lack of a market for the things of which they had far too much.

This state of things could not last ; and the next year the American Government agreed that if either Britain or France would take back its " blockade," it would trade with that one, and would forbid all intercourse with the other. Napoleon saw what an advantage it would give him if he could bring the United States into a war with Britain, so he promised at once to take off his blockade—a promise he never fulfilled. Then the United States at once forbade all trade with Great Britain and her possessions.

But the hardships arising from this state of things still continued to cause much suffering in both countries, and the British Government would have taken prompt action to stop the blockade, but for difficulties arising at home. The old King was now unfit to reign ; and his son—afterwards George IV—was made Regent ; and

a change of Ministry delayed matters. And the American Government, which had grown more and more hostile to Britain, began to think that while the military strength of Britain was so much taxed in Europe, it would not be hard to take possession of Canada, and add it to the United States. And though many of the best people of the United States opposed this as wrong, the Government declared war against Britain in 1812, a few weeks before the news crossed the sea that the British Government also had taken off the blockade.

Though the Americans had a very small fleet, its cruisers were fast-sailing and well-equipped, and were largely manned by English seamen who had deserted from British vessels, while the British Government, with its many cares, had grown somewhat careless about their fleet. So it had happened that four British frigates had recently been captured in single combat with stronger American vessels. These successes encouraged the idea that Canada, lying so close to the United States, with a long frontier defended only by three or four small forts, with its scattered settlements and few soldiers, would be an easy prize. At that time there were in all Canada only four or five thousand regular troops, of which only eighteen hundred were in Upper Canada. The American Government threatened immediate invasion from three different points at once, and issued a proclamation to the Canadian people, promising protection for themselves, their property and their rights, provided that they would submit to *their* forces, but threatening all the horrors of war in case they should resist them.

As we have seen, most of the people of Upper Canada

had been Loyalists, who had left all they possessed in the United States, because of their loyalty to Great Britain ; and they had been only about thirty years settled in their new homes. It was very hard for them to see war and ruin again threatening their quiet industrious lives and new-made homes. But they felt that Britain expected every one to do his duty, and they had no hesitation about *theirs*. The militia-men hastened to headquarters, to be ready to help the few regular troops. The farmers took down their old muskets ; there was drilling and ship-building in the little town of Kingston, the centre of the military and naval forces in Upper Canada ; and all seemed moved by one impulse—that of defending their families and their homes and the old flag for which they had sacrificed so much. Nor were the French Canadians behind their British fellow countrymen in their loyalty to the Empire which had treated them so well and so generously in the hour of conquest.

The brave British General, Brock, was at that time acting as Governor of Upper Canada, and he at once took vigorous action. With a small force of 330 regular troops, 400 Canadian volunteers, and 600 Indian allies, he met an American army of 2,000 strong, and after a brief cannonade, without the loss of a single man, forced the American General to surrender himself and his army, with Fort Detroit and all Michigan. This was just about the time when Wellington was driving Marmont's French army from Salamanca, and was as important for Canada as the other was for Spain. If Brock had not been prevented from following up his success as he desired, and if his valuable life had not been cut short by an American bullet in a gallant action

in October at Queenston Heights, he might have saved Britain and Canada an ordeal of anxious and harassing warfare. As it was, this fruitless war dragged on through the next two years ; the advantage being now on one side, now on the other—until two decisive battles, one at Lundy's Lane, near Niagara Falls, and the other at Chateauguay, in Lower Canada, ended the American invasion. By that time Napoleon had been conquered, and Britain was able to send out a large body of troops to carry the war into the United States itself, till both sides rejoiced when it was at last brought to an end by treaty in 1815.

It was only in that year that the long war in Europe was really ended. After Napoleon had ceased to be Emperor, he was allowed to have the little island of Elba between Italy and Corsica for himself, while Louis XVIII, the next heir of the Royal House, became King of France, promising to maintain the new liberties gained by the French people. But he did not altogether keep his promise or govern wisely ; and he punished too severely the men who had taken part in the changes of the " Revolution." And as the French now hated the Bourbons, and objected to the old ways which Louis restored, they grew very discontented. At the same time, the Allied Powers could not agree about the new settlement of Europe, and almost came to fighting with each other. Buonaparte, who had been watching from his island how things were turning out, thought he saw a good chance for getting back his lost power. He broke his treaty with the Allies, crossed over to Italy, gathered a small army of his old Guards around him, marched to Paris and entered the Tuileries, without opposition ;—while Louis fled without striking a

blow. Napoleon's old soldiers and a large part of the French nation were eager to regain their old renown in war, and in a few months he had collected an army of 250,000 men.

The Allies forgot their disputes and hastened to unite their forces to meet the common enemy in battle. The Prussian General Blücher, with 80,000 men, was to join an army of similar size under Wellington at a place called Quatre-Bras in Belgium. But Blücher was worsted in an encounter with Napoleon on the way, and Marshal Ney attacked the British and Belgian troops at Quatre-Bras, while only a portion of the army had arrived. The Belgian troops gave way before the charge of the French horse, but the steady courage of the British foot-soldiers held the ground till more troops came up, and Ney had to retire, while Wellington withdrew, in good order, to the field of Waterloo, which was now to become famous for the most important and bravely fought battle of modern times.

This place was on the high-road to Brussels, and Wellington hoped that Blücher, coming from that direction, would soon come up with him. But the miry forest roads along which the Prussian troops had to make their toilsome way, delayed their arrival much longer than had been expected. Buonaparte had been afraid that the British troops would go on retreating till joined by the Prussians, but when he saw the long red line of British soldiers drawn up on a long ridge of low hills stretching across a wide field, from a country-house called Hougomont to a straggling village called La Haye Sainte, he exclaimed—"I have them!" But—for once—he was mistaken.

It was a fair Sunday morning in June when thou-

sands of quiet English people were going peacefully to church along the fragrant English lanes, that the battle of Waterloo was fought between the two greatest Generals of the century for the liberties of Europe. Buonaparte had some advantages on his side, for he had better guns and cavalry, while the forces were pretty equally matched as to number, each side having 70,000 men, though a large portion of Wellington's army were Belgians, and were not as good fighters as the British soldiers. Nevertheless Wellington, like Nelson, was determined to "do his duty," whatever might happen to himself.

As the country-house of Hougomont was a strong post, and held by the English Guards, it was most important for Buonaparte to get possession of it; and a sharp attack upon it began the battle. All day the fiercest fighting raged around the thick stone walls and through the courtyard and gardens which, long before evening, were piled with the dead and dying. Twelve thousand French soldiers fought hard to take it, and success in this might have gained the day. But though by force of numbers they gained the orchard and then set fire to the house, the Guards never gave way through the fierce fight, seven hours long. At last the French had almost forced their way in, when the Guards, by a last effort, hurled themselves on the French, compelled them to give way, and then by main force closed the great gates against the fresh troops advancing to the charge. And when the evening fell, and the long struggle was over, a small band of the brave Guards, worn-out and grimy, came out, amid the cheers of their fellow-soldiers, through the lingering smoke and the thousands of dead that lay around the walls.

All that memorable day, the battle had gone on, fought, on both sides, with desperate courage and resolve. Many of the soldiers of Wellington were raw recruits in their first fight, while on the other side were many of the finest and most renowned troops in Europe, and all fought as if determined to win the day. In vain did the French General Ney, called "the bravest of the brave," dash his splendid cavalry thirteen times against the sturdy British squares, standing steady under these murderous attacks and the fire of the heavy guns, which once blew a whole side out of a square of men, every soldier in it lying dead or wounded. Many of the French horsemen wore cuirasses and helmets of steel, on which the British bullets clattered "like a great hail-storm on glass, or smiths pounding their hammers on iron plates." Under the heaviest fire the British troops stood as still as on parade. Wellington—"the iron Duke" as he was often called—rode up and down the field, watching, ordering, encouraging his men—"Hard pounding this, gentlemen!" he said once to his officers, "let us see who will pound longest!"

But at times the issue of the battle seemed uncertain—even to Wellington—for his troops were falling fast, and as yet there was no sign of Blücher's army, still plodding on through the mud and mire. One of his Generals asked him, lest he himself should be struck down, to tell him what his plan was. "My plan," said the Duke, "consists in dying here to the last man!" As one of his regiments was about to receive a fierce charge, he shouted, "Stand fast, 85th! We must not be beaten! What would they say of us in England?" "Never fear, sir!" the men shouted back; "we know our duty!" But though they knew and did

their duty, Wellington knew that the French might yet gain the day unless succour came soon, and his fear found expression in the exclamation, "Would that night or Blücher would come!"

Just as the long summer day grew into late afternoon, the Duke's listening ears heard the welcome sound of Blücher's guns, as yet far away. Napoleon heard them, too; and knew that now the case was desperate, and that he must try his last resource. He had still in reserve his famous "Old Guard"—the veteran soldiers who had won for him many a victory. These he drew up in two huge columns of attack. One marched along the field towards Hougomont, to be beaten back there. The other swept all before it till it reached the top of the long ridge behind which Wellington had made his wearied troops lie down to await the Old Guards' approach. As they reached the summit, the British Foot Guards sprang to their feet, and—charging them with levelled bayonets—swept the Old Guards down the slope.

Then the whole army was ordered to advance, and horse, foot and artillery bore down upon the mass of French troops just as Blücher's army, with its guns, pushed forward on the French flank. The French army gave way, and their retreat became a headlong rout. "All is lost!" exclaimed Buonaparte, as he fled from the bloody field, well knowing that his star had set for ever. Britain and the rest of Europe were freed from their great "Disturber" at last. For him there was no possibility but surrender, no future but six years of imprisonment—till his death—in the lonely island of St. Helena.

There were no railways or telegraphs in Britain

then. But the mail-coaches in which people used then to travel were decked with flowers and oak-leaves—the coachmen, or “guards,” were adorned with laurel wreaths, and the horses with white ribbons, as they dashed joyously through the peaceful towns and villages announcing a “glorious victory.” But while the people cheered and shouted, some of the houses were still and silent, with blinds close drawn ; and the cheering crowds kept respectfully away from these, knowing that the families within were mourning the loss of a father or a son, a husband or a brother, lying dead on the famous field of Waterloo.

CHAPTER XLVI

KING STEAM AND "PUFFING BILLY"

1819-1848

ALTHOUGH the Battle of Waterloo had set Britain free from its greatest enemy abroad, it was by no means free from trouble at home. The long war had cost the people dear, both in men and money; and the heavy debt and high taxes pressed strongly on the nation. Of the conquests made at sea during the war, Britain retained, when peace was made, only the islands of Ceylon and Mauritius, the Cape of Good Hope, and some West India islands. British trade had been sadly hindered by the war—goods meant to be sent abroad remaining at home unsold, so that many workers were out of employment. Bad harvests also caused a scarcity of bread, and selfish landowners in Parliament got a tax made forbidding wheat to be brought in from other countries till high prices caused a famine. The people grew very discontented, and many were desirous of the Reform in Parliament that Pitt had proposed, while others would not hear of the smallest change. Canning had been out of office for some ten years, and as the King's mind—disordered before—gave way altogether on the death of his youngest daughter—the Princess Amelia—the Prince of Wales had been made Regent in his place.

King George died in 1820, sixty years after he had begun to reign, though he had not ruled during all those years ; and the Prince of Wales now became George the Fourth. He was handsome and clever, but, like Charles II, he cared much more for his own pleasure than for the good of his people. Canning became Foreign Secretary two years later, and—following the example of William Pitt—he tried to keep Britain out of the quarrels then going on in Europe, between the rulers who had come back to rule the kingdoms Napoleon had taken from them, and their subjects, who wanted greater freedom. And some of these quarrels have not been settled yet.

During all the destructive wars that had been going on, while thousands of British soldiers had been fighting and dying on battlefields abroad, many thousands of the people at home had been busily employed in making great quantities of useful goods of all sorts. And as they had far more of these things than they could possibly use, they were glad to send them to other countries and to buy from these other things that they needed, and could not produce. This sort of exchange we usually call by the name of "Trade," and the more that countries can exchange with each other in this way, the better it is for the world. As we have seen, times were very bad in Britain when her trade was crippled and her goods unsold, and her people burdened with heavy taxes, while wages were low and bread was scarce and dear.

In the early days of England, as we have seen, the people used to spin the wool of their sheep into yarn by hand, and for a great many years they had also woven it into cloth. It may be remembered how Edward I got Flemish weavers to settle in Britain to promote

the art of weaving there, as most of the English yarn was then woven in Flanders. By and by, however, weaving became a common employment in Britain. In the east and south of England, as well as in Scotland and Ireland, the father of the family used to work in his cottage at his handloom, while his wife and children sat round him, busy carding the wool and spinning it into yarn. In Ireland and Scotland, more particularly, many farmers grew flax and wove it into linen cloth, and in these ways many of the people were able to earn a frugal living. In Manchester great quantities of cotton cloth were woven, and as the cotton could not be grown in Britain, it was brought from warm countries such as India and the Southern States of America. There were many more workers now in Britain than in former times, for the number of people in Britain had nearly doubled in the course of the eighteenth century, just closed.

In the peaceful times of Walpole, a man named John Wyatt made a contrivance to "spin without fingers," or by what we now call a spinning-machine. After that, other machines were made, and about 1764 another named Hargreaves invented a spinning-jenny which could be made to do sixteen times as much spinning as a single worker could do in the same time. And as the weavers could not now keep up with the spinners, it seemed a great improvement when a clergyman named Cartwright invented a "powerloom," with which much more and better cloth could be made than by the old handloom. These machines, however, had to be driven by water-power, and were of no use without water enough to work them.

At length it came into the mind of a famous man

called Watt, that the force of the steam which bursts so strongly from the spout of every tea-kettle might be made to turn wheels and do many other useful things. And this wonderful power, which has altered the whole character of the business of the world, was soon used to drive the spinning and weaving machines, and to do as much work in this way as could be done by great numbers of human hands. At first many of those who had earned their living in this way feared that these machines would put them out of work altogether; and indeed many did lose their livelihood; and the discontent thus aroused broke out into riots in which some of the new machines were violently destroyed. But in the end, so much more cloth was made and sold that more people were employed than ever.

But there was still another thing needed for the prosperity of the country; and this was—to find some way of carrying heavy loads of goods from one place to another. When the ships brought bales of raw cotton to Liverpool, there was no way of conveying them to Manchester, where the great mills were, except by means of horses; and when the bales of cotton were ready to be put on board ship, to be sold elsewhere, they had to be carried in the same way. This was so inconvenient that canals were made to take them by water; but the boats could not carry nearly as much as the mills could produce. And there was the same trouble about the carrying of coal from the mines to the places where it was needed.

The roads were often so bad that it was difficult for horses to draw heavy-laden carts, even for short distances. Boards were sometimes laid over them for the wheels to roll upon, and when the wood was found

to rot quickly, iron plates were used instead. As a gentleman named Outram improved the roads greatly in this way, they were called "Outram roads" at first, and afterwards "tram roads" for short.

But about the time when the United States became a separate country from Britain, a boy was born near Newcastle, in the coal country of England, who was to become famous by finding out how great quantities of goods could be carried quickly, easily and cheaply, as we have them carried to-day. This boy was George Stephenson, the son of a collier who worked in the deep dark coal-pits at hewing from the masses below the black lumps of coal so necessary to the welfare of Britain, which are then hoisted to the top of the long straight shaft. And many boys are employed in the work of sorting and cleaning it before it is carted away.

George was a helpful, faithful, kindly boy, who loved birds and flowers, and his trusty dog, and was kind to every living creature that came in his way. And one of his amusements was, to make toy engines of mud, with bits of stick for blow-pipes. When he was seventeen, he was placed in charge of a pumping engine, which he studied carefully till he knew all about it. He was very anxious to learn more about such things, but he did not know how to do so, for he could not read or write, because he could never be spared from his work to go to school.

But at last he heard of an evening school, where he learned reading, writing and arithmetic, in which last his teacher thought his progress "wonderful." And without it, he never could have done the great work of his life. By and by he became brakesman of a pumping engine, and then he married; but his young wife

died three years later—leaving him a little baby-boy, who was to become still more famous than his father did, because of the great works he was to accomplish. One day a fire in the cottage chimney caused great damage to an eight-day clock, and George took it to pieces and repaired it himself, through which he learned a great deal more about machinery than he had known before.

Poor George had very hard times just then. Besides the loss of his wife, it was very hard for him, with low wages, high taxes and bread scarce and dear, to earn enough to eat for himself and his boy and his aged parents, who were now unable to work. And at that time all young men were liable to be drawn by lot to be soldiers or seamen. George Stephenson was drawn, and as he felt he could not leave his duties at home, it cost him all that he had to pay a man to go in his place. At one time things seemed so bad that he thought he would try his fortune in America, but he could not raise money enough for the journey, though he added to his small wages by tinkering clocks, cobbling shoes, and cutting out the clothing of the pitmen.

But after a while, when a pit became flooded, the people of the colliery found out that George Stephenson was the only man who could find the way to pump the water out; and soon after he got a good post and better wages. And he went on learning all he could from books, until the time came when he could put his knowledge to great use.

Long before this time, the people of the United States had been trying to make boats go by steam, and two of these had been made to go in this way, though on quite a different plan from those we see to-day. But

in 1807 a man named Robert Fulton made the first modern steamboat, the "Clermont," and launched it on the Hudson, where it went, against wind and tide, at the rate of five miles an hour.

About four years before that, a tin-miner of Cornwall, Captain Trevithick, had made a carriage driven by steam to run on ordinary roads, but owing to the roughness of these it was not of much use, as no one yet had thought of building railroads; but at last the owner of a coal-mine determined to try a steam-carriage or locomotive on his tram-roads. He had one built like that of Trevithick, but it exploded at the start. He tried it again three times, but with little success. George Stephenson heard of it, and went to see "Black Billy," as the locomotive was called, but found it a rough sort of machine, not fit for much more work than a good horse. Then another one was made and tried at Leeds, and George went to see *that* too, and as it also was not a success, he began to think of trying to make one himself. Lord Ravensworth, a neighbouring nobleman, thought George could do it, and helped him with the money it required. But he had neither good workmen nor good tools, and his first attempt did not succeed. But he "tried again," and, after a time, finished another, which he called "Puffing Billy." This went to work at once, snorting and puffing vigorously, and worked well and usefully for many years. Indeed it may be called the model of all the railway locomotives that have been built since then.

For now George was making a name for himself, and his son Robert was growing up and beginning to be able to help him. And so clever did he show himself in all that belonged to machinery, that his father sent

him to the University of Edinburgh for six months, in which time he learned more than most students do in three years.

The need of tram-roads throughout the country was being more and more felt ; for though some of the lines had already been plated with iron, and rails had been thought of, no one believed that they would be really profitable. But there was a rich and enterprising man named James, who was thinking seriously about a railway or tram-road between Liverpool and Manchester. For the Liverpool warehouses were often crowded with bales of cotton, for lack of which the Manchester mills were standing still ; and for the same cause the woven cloth was often long delayed in being conveyed to Liverpool for shipment. Mr. James undertook to make a survey for a tram-road between the two towns. But this was a new idea, and on this account people were so much afraid of it that the surveyors who were trying to lay it out were mobbed by the country folk. Mr. James would have greatly preferred a steam railroad, but he felt it would be of no use to speak of it yet, as hardly any one would believe in it. But he went to see "Puffing Billy," with which he was so delighted that he declared—truly—that, before long, it would make a great change in the life of the world. But there were still so many difficulties and objections in the way, that for the time no more was said about it.

In the meantime, however, Mr. Howard Pease, a wealthy Quaker, who had coal-mines near a place called Darlington, was seriously considering the building of a railroad to carry his coal to another place called Stockton, where it was to be shipped, and by and by he persuaded his friends to form a small company for this

purpose. But so many objections were still made to the use of steam, that he changed his mind and, after all, asked Parliament for liberty to build a tram-road between these two places. George Stephenson heard of the proposed road, and felt he must have a hand in it. So he went with a friend to Darlington, to talk with Mr. Pease, who saw that this wonderful collier was just the man he wanted. Stephenson urged that the road should be a railway, and when Mr. Pease asked whether he meant a horse railway, he replied—"A locomotive is worth fifty horses." And he invited Mr. Pease to come to see "Puffing Billy."

Accordingly Mr. Pease went to Northumberland, and saw and believed. Stephenson was at once employed to take charge of the new road. He had to look closely after everything that was done, and he had not workmen whom he considered fit to be trusted with the work. His son Robert helped him greatly, but, as he was not so strong as his father, his health gave way, and he took a sea voyage to South America, where he was employed in looking after mining operations. Before he left England, his father said to him and a young friend: "Lads, I think you will live to see the day when railroads will be the great highway for the King and all his subjects; and it will be cheaper for a working man to travel on a railway than to walk." Things were moving faster than Stephenson knew, for he lived to see that day himself, as he then hardly hoped to do.

On September 27, 1828, the Stockton and Darlington Railway, thirty-two miles in length, was finished and opened, and four locomotives of six horse power each began to carry lime, coal and bricks at the rate of five or six miles an hour, the beginning of the vast

land traffic by steam which spreads its network over the whole world to-day. Even a passenger coach, drawn by one horse, was driven over it, and delighted the passengers by going at the rate of nine miles an hour!

And now people again began to think and talk about the Liverpool and Manchester railway, and after much consideration Stephenson was asked to lay out a line and calculate what the expenses would be. There was violent opposition to this survey also. Rough men and boys threatened to attack the surveyor and destroy his instruments, and dukes and lords headed the fray. When the Parliament was asked to permit it, there was a strong opposition there also. All sorts of objections were raised, and terrible consequences were foretold. Stephenson was declared crazy for stating that he could drive an engine safely at the rate of twelve miles an hour. The fight went on for two months, and then the plan was defeated in Parliament, in spite of an appeal from one of the largest towns in England to let the power of steam have a fair trial. Mr. Huskisson, Member of Parliament for Liverpool, a friend of Mr. Canning, urged another attempt the next year, and this time it passed both Houses, so that the railway could now be built, though the victory cost twenty thousand pounds. And then George Stephenson was appointed to be the builder of the road.

This was a far harder task than his former one; for there were tremendous difficulties in the way. The first was, to make a solid road across a dangerous bog near Liverpool, called Chat-Moss. Many cart-loads of earth were sunk there, but the bog seemed as bad as ever. This so discouraged the friends of the road, that, at length, they held a meeting near

the edge of the Moss, to decide whether it would not be best to give up the great work. But George Stephenson was not disheartened. "Go ahead,"—he said cheerily, and they did.

Another tough piece of work was that of boring a tunnel through solid rock, under the city of Liverpool, but no difficulty discouraged the brave engineer, who always led the way through the danger and hardship. For four years the great work was pushed on—taxing all his powers ; and when it was at last completed, it was not yet decided whether the railway should be run by steam or horse-power. For the people were still terribly afraid of the locomotive.

Stephenson stood faithfully by it, however, and it was decided to have one for present service on the railway. At length, after sending men to examine those used on the Darlington and Stockton Railway, it was agreed to offer a prize of five hundred pounds for the best new locomotive of the sort wanted. And now Stephenson felt that he must try to build the new and improved engine, and that he must have a skilful helper. So he wrote to his son Robert, for he thought no one else could do it well, and sent him to the work he now had at Newcastle, to do the very best he could.

It hardly needs to be said that Robert took up the work zealously. All the improvements that could be thought of were made, especially in the boiler, in which heating tubes were now placed. The new engine was a great success. It was called the "Rocket," and quite threw "Puffing Billy," into the shade. "The 'Rocket' is all right and ready,"—Robert at last wrote joyously to his father. The testing-day came, and crowds flocked to Liverpool to see the trial. The "Rocket"

proved the winner of the prize, drawing a load of thirteen tons, and making what was thought the amazing speed of twenty-five miles an hour.

George Stephenson had thus gained fame and fortune, and the satisfaction of feeling that he was now doing his right work in the world. He soon got an order to make eight engines for the new railway, and when they were finished, there was a grand opening of the road on the thirteenth of September, 1830, when the eight engines with their trains were to run from Liverpool to Manchester, and there was to be a celebration at each end of the line. This was rightly regarded as a national event, and the Duke of Wellington, now Prime Minister, with Sir Robert Peel and Mr. Huskisson, came to take part in it. Numbers of eager spectators from all over England crowded the towns, carriages lined the country roads, the river was covered with boats, and it was all that the constables and soldiers could do to guard the track.

At last all was ready, and the new locomotives, having been faithfully tested, steamed off in proud procession, carrying six hundred passengers, at the rate of twenty-five miles an hour. The "Northumbrian," driven by George Stephenson himself, took the lead, carrying the Duke and his party. While every one was full of glad anticipation, a sad accident occurred, which in one moment turned joy into grief and dismay. Seventeen miles from Liverpool, the "Northumbrian" was drawn up by the track, to allow the other engines to pass in review. Mr. Huskisson unfortunately alighted, and was standing on the track, conversing with the Duke, when on came the "Rocket," at full speed. Mr. Huskisson heard the cry—"Get in! Get in!" and

tried to do so, but he was a moment too late. He was struck down, and the "Rocket" went over him.

He was lifted into the carriage, saying—"I have met my death," and was swiftly borne home by the "Northumbrian," only to die. The Duke and his friend wished to stop the proceedings, and return at once to Liverpool, but it was felt that Manchester should not be disappointed of its celebration, for which great preparations had been made. And now railway travel was fairly established on this pioneer line, the first of the thousands that girdle the earth. Within the first eighteen months, seven hundred thousand people were carried over that road without an accident. And George Stephenson, who died in 1848, lived to see railways become the common mode of travel in Britain, as he had foretold.

Great railways soon needed great bridges, and this was the work that made Robert Stephenson even more famous than his father. He built three such bridges, and so showed the way to build others. One of these was a high-level bridge at Newcastle, his old home. Another was the famous tubular (or hollow) bridge over the Menai Straits, connecting the island of Anglesea with the mainland. But the most remarkable trophy of his skill is the long Victoria Bridge over the great St. Lawrence river, near Montreal. This was built to carry the Grand Trunk Railway of Canada across the river, on the way to the harbour of Portland on the Atlantic Ocean. It has twenty-four spans, and the centre one is so high that the largest vessels with their tall masts can easily pass under. This bridge took six years to build, and when finished it was named in honour of the good Queen Victoria, then

on the throne. It was opened in October 1859 ; but two months before its completion Robert Stephenson had died, cut off in his prime.

At the banquet given in honour of the opening of this splendid triumph of his skill, the fitting toast was given—"Robert Stephenson, the greatest engineer the world has ever seen !" But a deep silence took the place of the usual cheer.

Britain did him all honour, giving him a tomb in Westminster Abbey, near kings and princes, statesmen like the two Pitts, and warriors like the Iron Duke himself—who died there some years before. For the men who faithfully serve their country in the arts of peace deserve our homage as much as those who serve it in those of war. And to George and Robert Stephenson, no less than to the Iron Duke himself, we may well apply the noble lines of Tennyson in his Ode on the death of Wellington—

"Not once or twice, in our fair island-story,
The path of duty was the way to glory!"

CHAPTER XLVII

OUR ISLAND EMPIRE

IN former chapters we have seen how the British Empire had spread its bounds westward over a great part of North America, and eastward over a large region in Asia ; while in wars with other nations, Britain had obtained a number of valuable islands such as Malta, Minorca and Cyprus in Europe, Ceylon in Asia, and several of the West India Islands, close to North America. But away to the westward of America there stretched—towards the shores of Asia—a vast unknown waste of waters, where, as yet, the British flag had scarcely been seen.

It had long been thought by many that there must be a great unknown continent somewhere between Asia and America ; and, for two centuries, Spanish, Portuguese and Dutch explorers had been trying to find it. If you look at a map of Asia, you will see that from the most southern point of Asia there stretches a long chain of islands, beginning with the large ones of Sumatra and Java, and—as we now know—ending with the largest island in the world. This great island was once called New Holland, because the Dutch were the first to come upon it ; but now, with two or three adjoining islands, it is called the “ Continent of Aus-

tralia," and is part of the British Empire, though so far away from Britain. As it is below the equator, and exactly on the other side of the globe, the British called it "the *Antipodes*," as being beneath our feet.

It was a Dutch explorer, named Abel Tasman, who discovered the small island south of Australia, which he called "Van Diemen's Land," in honour of the Governor of the Dutch West Indies, which is now known by the explorer's name—Tasmania. A few days later he found the two islands of New Zealand, lying so far beyond Australia that in the maps of the world they are placed in the Western Hemisphere.

At the close of the Seven Years' War, there were so many good seamen left without occupation that three expeditions were sent out to explore the Pacific. One of these was commenced by the famous Captain Cook who, in his voyage round the world, found and sailed round New Zealand. Then he went to look for the small island of Tasmania, and in doing this he came in sight of a ridge of low sandhills that turned out to be the south-east coast of Australia. He anchored in Botany Bay, and tried to find out all he could about the country and the natives. He took possession of the land for Britain, but he was not satisfied with that, but went on looking for a "continent" that did not exist.

There was, in his party, a young botanist named Joseph Banks, who probably gave its name to Botany Bay, and had been very active in exploring its shores. He was greatly pleased with what he saw, and had much to tell on his return about the beautiful and rich land he had seen;—though, in this last, he seems to have been mistaken. Now one of the things that

happened when Britain lost her North American colonies was,—that she found much difficulty in disposing of her prisoners. For, as we have seen, from early times many of these had been banished to America, especially for what were considered offences against the State. *Now* they could not send them there, and as there were not prisons enough in which to keep all the British convicts, Joseph Banks proposed that many of them should be sent to this far country in the Pacific, uninhabited except for a few fuzzy-haired black people, called “black-fellows.”

In 1787 Captain Philip, of the Royal Navy, took out a thousand convicts whom he landed in Botany Bay. With these he had to try to build up a settlement from the very beginning, and he did not find there the rich meadows and farming land that he expected. However he did find a noble harbour close by, and there he began to build the town of Sydney, now the largest city of Australia.

It was very hard to find food for his convicts, as well as to keep them in good order, for everything had to be imported from China or South Africa, and the settlers had to be put on short rations. And the convicts were so mixed—unfortunate harmless people being herded together with criminals—that it was very difficult to manage them. He tried placing them in different settlements, according to their character, and the younger and more adventurous were allowed to go to any place they could reach by sea, and settle there.

It was unfortunately thought advisable to send out a regiment of Guards to watch the convicts, but these were often harder to manage than the convicts were,

for they tried to seize the best land they could find, brought in "rum" (or spirits), and tried to get even the Governors into their power. One man, named Macarthur, having got from the Cape of Good Hope, and the flock of George III, some fine merino sheep, thus made the beginning of Australia's great wool-growing industry. But he took sides with the Guards, helped a mutiny against the Governor, Admiral Bligh, and for two years there was no proper rule in the colony.

The British Government determined to put a stop to this state of things, and settled that the convicts should be set free and encouraged to earn their living and their pardon by good conduct, so that they might settle down into honest citizens, fitted to build up the country. Colonel McQuarie, the first soldier-governor, tried to carry out this plan, and opened up more land for settlement, till New South Wales, as the colony was called, became three by four hundred miles in extent, instead of forty by fifty, as he had found it. Exploring expeditions penetrated into the unknown wilds, and two great journeys were made by a man named Charles Stuart, who became blind through the hardships he endured, while some of his men lost their senses altogether. A tale of Kingsley's, entitled *Two Years Ago*, tells much about these Australian adventures. But the man who did most for New South Wales was named Wentworth. While still a Cambridge student, he wrote a history of the colony, which made the English people much interested in its welfare, and by means of a newspaper which he edited, he urged that the colony should have the ordinary civil freedom that Englishmen possess. New immigrants began to

come from England—the better behaved convicts were sent as farm-labourers to live under better conditions, while the worst criminals were sent to Tasmania. There the natives had been more barbarous and more harshly treated than on the mainland, and escaped convicts became lawless bushrangers. Under a strict and severe Governor named Arthur, these robbers were swept away—the “black-fellows” were sent to an island in Bass’s Straits, and the convicts were either made day-labourers, or sent to live in a spot from which they could not escape. The first colony became known as South Australia, and its capital town as Melbourne, in honour of the British Minister of that name. And—about 1826—some people in England who were very anxious to try some new ideas, thought it would be a good thing to start a new colony in Australia for that purpose, and in this way that of West Australia was founded, with Perth for its capital town.

In 1859, the northern colony of Queensland, with Brisbane for its capital, was separated from New South Wales. Having excellent grass-lands, it long remained chiefly a pasture-land, though sugar and cotton were afterwards grown in the lowlands near the coast. Western Australia, not having labourers enough for its needs, allowed the admission of convicts till 1868, but this was not approved by the rest of Australia, and it was agreed that no more should be received into the country.

During the latter half of the nineteenth century, each of these colonies was allowed to have its own Government, very like that of the Canadian provinces. But, in time, both the British Government and the

Australian one came to see how much better it would be that all the colonies should be united into one great Commonwealth as the Canadian provinces had lately been. This came into being in 1901, with a "constitution" (or charter), which gives to people at large a still greater voice in their government than they have in other parts of the British Empire. All its citizens, male and female, of six months' standing, can vote for the members of both Houses; the Governor, appointed by the British Government, has the same kind of power, and the same public duties to perform, as those of a Canadian Governor.

The great island or continent of Australia is—next to Canada—Britain's most important possession. The great central table-lands provide vast grazing grounds for sheep, which supply the greater part of the world's wool; and though many parts of these are not well watered and are subject to terrible droughts, which in time past have cut off millions of sheep, they are in general very productive. In many places artificial watering may be procured by sinking deep wells, for so much water filters through the soft rocks, deep down below the dry surface, that when a deep hole is bored, the water will spring to the top. Then along the sides of these central table-lands there are many deep gulleys or valleys, full of the richest herbage and tall gum-trees and acacias, and many other things which do not grow in cooler countries. In the southern and better watered parts of Australia, where it is cooler because farther from the equator, which is north of Australia, wheat can be grown in large quantities, with other crops that flourish in temperate climates. Along the sea-coast of hot Queensland,

sugar-canes, bananas and other fruits of warm countries grow in increasing quantities. And the slopes of the mountain ranges abound in valuable minerals, from gold and silver to tin, iron and coal. It may, therefore, be easily seen how much big Australia can give to the British Isles in return for the help it receives in money to carry on improvements. For she sends to the British people gold for their coin, wool for their clothing, frozen meat, grain and butter for their food, and excellent opportunities to turn their spare cash to good account.

The two large islands which, with a number of smaller ones, make up the archipelago, or Dominion of New Zealand, are the same which Captain Cook discovered soon after finding Australia. The two large ones are called the North and South islands, though the South one is sometimes called the "middle island," because there is a smaller one, Stewart Island, lying south of it. These islands possess some of the finest scenery in the world, being filled with noble mountains, wooded with trees that look like gigantic ferns, and other wonderful trees and plants that we never see in colder countries. Some of the mountains are volcanoes, though there has not been an eruption for many years : and on the sides of some there are glaciers, or sloping sheets of ice, like what are seen in the Rocky Mountains and in Switzerland. Among them, too, lie beautiful little lakes, with steep mountainous shores ; and the sea-coast has grand, rugged fiords or mountain bays, like those of Norway. But there are also lovely and fertile valleys, with rich deep soil, in which grow magnificent flowers and superb ferns. The climate, though rainy on the western side of the South

Island, is in general considered the most delightful climate in the world.

When Captain Cook first discovered New Zealand, he found in it a copper-coloured race of savages called Maories (pronounced Mowries), who lived very much as did the people of the New Stone Age in Britain. Captain Cook first set up the Union Jack on a hill in New Zealand, to claim it for Britain, and made five visits to the islands, in the course of which he left with the natives some pigs, and also potatoes and other useful plants for seed. But he did not always treat them as he should have done, and so had some unfortunate quarrels with them, which did not promise well for the future.

French explorers soon followed Captain Cook, and many explorers, traders or settlers also found their way to the islands. Some of them wanted to catch whales or seals, and also to trade with the natives, to whom they began to sell muskets and spirits, as well as cotton, in return for their timber, flax and potatoes. These traders were often bad men, who treated the natives cruelly, and their coming had, therefore, a very bad effect upon them.

But soon there arrived Englishmen of a very different sort, who came as Christian Missionaries to these heathen Maories. From the beginning of the nineteenth century the Christian people of England had begun to feel the duty of carrying to the heathen lands of the British Empire that selfsame Gospel of Christ which had been brought by Augustine to Britain twelve hundred years before. In 1800 William Carey had gone to India, the first of a noble band of missionaries to the Hindus, and in 1814 Samuel Marsden,

Chaplain of New South Wales, held the first Christian service in New Zealand. Eight years later, the Wesleyans (or followers of Wesley) began their Mission there, and a Roman Catholic one soon followed in 1830. These good men found it hard to fight against the evil influences of the "baser sort" of white men, but in time much good was done. Under their teaching, most of the natives ceased to enslave and devour one another, and settled down to till their fields and live decent lives. But others were utterly lawless, and when quarrels arose between their tribes, they tried to destroy each other. For as yet New Zealand had no settled government.

The Missionaries were, of course, anxious to have some good laws, and they also feared that France was planning to seize the island, so they advised the native chiefs to ask the King of Great Britain to take it under his protection, and make laws for it. Meanwhile, a number of English people who wished to settle in New Zealand, had formed a society for emigrating thither, and the French formed another, almost at the same time. Then the British Government took things into their own hands, and sent out a Governor to rule under the Governor of New South Wales. The islands of New Zealand were annexed to Britain in 1830, by treaty with the chiefs, in which the British Government promised to faithfully respect the rights of the chiefs to their own lands, and to give the natives all the rights and privileges of British subjects. This treaty was signed just in time to stop a French attempt to gain possession of New Zealand.

It would take far too long to tell the story of the New Zealand settlements during the last seventy years.

The chief troubles in these years were the unhappy wars which arose, mainly because some of the leaders of the British Government were not careful to observe the Golden Rule, and the Treaty of Waitanga, by which Britain got possession of the islands.

The northern island was settled long before the southern one, which was more suitable for pasture farms. It was first settled about the middle of the nineteenth century, by a Scottish company, which prospered, and built a beautiful town they called Dunedin, from the old name of the Scottish capital. Shortly after, an English company, called "the Canterbury Pilgrims," came also, and built the town of Canterbury. They were thinking more of growing crops than of pasturing flocks, but they soon found out how well the plains and mountain slopes were fitted for sheep-farming; and in time wool-growing became the great business of the island.

It had been early known that gold was to be found in New Zealand, and a few years after the rush to the Australian gold-fields, this precious metal began to be found in great quantities. People trooped in from all parts of the world, till the Europeans in the island—who had mustered, in 1860, eighty-four thousand—had doubled their numbers. As the mines were near good farming lands, many who came for gold settled down to cultivate farms, and became, for the most part, peaceful citizens.

During the latter half of the nineteenth century New Zealand has governed itself as nearly in British fashion, as circumstances would permit. It has now the same form of government as Australia, which seems to work equally well there, and has, in addition,

a system of old-age pensions, laws meant to restrain intemperance, and schools for six thousand children of the native Maories, besides a good education for those of the English settlers.

Besides great Australia and the Dominion of New Zealand, Britain possesses many other islands all over the globe, whose stories it would take a large book to tell. Some of them—like Ceylon and Cyprus—have already been mentioned. In the far East—or what are called the East Indies, she owns a part of the chain of islands which stretches from Asia towards Australia. She has the islands of Penang and Singapore, and a part of Malacca—the long tongue of land which reaches out among the islands. She has also a colony of her own in the large island of Borneo, which is called Labuan, or British Borneo. These colonies produce great quantities of tea, coffee, spices, drugs, as well as precious stones, so that they bring much wealth to Britain.

Then—if we turn to the Western Hemisphere—we shall find a great number of islands there, belonging to her Empire. If we look at the Northern Hemisphere we shall see first the large islands of Newfoundland and Cape Breton, the latter of which belongs to the Dominion of Canada, and then to the north-west of Canada, the island of Vancouver, also belonging to the same Dominion. Looking southward on the Atlantic, we see the Bermudas, and the various clusters of the West India Islands, some of which Drake claimed for Britain in the time of Queen Elizabeth. The “Mother Colony” of these was that of “St. Chris” in the Leeward Islands, where a settlement was made in 1623. Now she owns the large islands of Barbadoes, Trinidad, Jamaica, The Leeward and Windward

Islands, and the Bahamas, besides her settlements on the mainland of South America, of British Guiana and Honduras. If you will look at all these places on the map, you will see the wonderful extent of Britain's island empire, which stretches from the cold regions of the Arctic Circle, to the burning climate and magnificent trees and plants of the Tropics, as we call the part of the world on each side of the equator.

CHAPTER XLVIII

SIR ROBERT PEEL AND THE CORN LAWS

1820-1837

KING GEORGE IV did not count for very much as a ruler of Britain, during his short reign of ten years, though his own example was far from having a good influence on his subjects. He did not, however, interfere with the able Ministers of State who conducted the affairs of the Empire, and many things were done, during his reign and the next, which were important and necessary to the progress and well-being of the British people.

The early years of the nineteenth century were marked by much distress and misery in Britain. Not only were the people harassed by losses in war, and even by the dread of invasion, but—as we have seen—the long prevalence of war had made the taxes heavy and food dear, and had also lessened the ability of other countries to buy British goods, so that a great deal remained unsold, and there was less work needed. Then the spinning and weaving machines which had been invented—though very useful in the long run—could do much more work with fewer workers; and so in this way many were thrown out of work. And many soldiers and sailors, disbanded at the

close of the war, added greatly to the number of those who were unable to earn a livelihood.

But notwithstanding the scarcity of work, and the high price of food, the landlords and farmers were selfishly thinking only of getting high prices for their grain, and for this end got Parliament to forbid grain being brought from other countries, where it was plentiful, until it cost so much in England that people had to pay what were called "famine prices." This enabled the farmers to pay higher rents to their landlords, and both became rich, while it was hard for the poor to get bread at all, or even the flour for making it. There are still persons living who remember these hard times, and can tell how the family loaf used to be cut into slices, and when they could get butter, it was spread with a hot knife, to make it go farther. These bad times led to riots and lawless acts among the poor, who saw their families starving, and could do nothing to prevent it. They hated these Corn Laws and began to hate the farmers who selfishly refused to sell their wheat until it should reach the highest price; and sometimes in these riots they burned the ricks of such farmers, and broke up the machines which—they thought—prevented them from getting work. And the discontent became so great, that it led to a wicked scheme, called the Cato Street Plot, to murder the whole Cabinet at once.

Mr. Canning and his friend Mr. Huskisson, whose accidental death so sadly marked the opening of the first railway, had been trying to remedy this state of things, believing that people should be allowed to buy freely what they needed from other countries. This was the beginning of the Free Trade of Britain, which

has been the foundation of her great prosperity in trade during the nineteenth century. Mr. Canning also tried to do away with some of the disadvantages which the old disputes had brought about ; and which pressed heavily on many of the English people who did not belong to the Established Church; and to secure equal rights for all, whatever form of religious belief they might hold.

Canning, however, died soon after his friend, before all this work was done. Shortly after his death, a gallant expedition was sent to Greece, under Admiral Codrington, to protect the Greeks from the Turks, who were about to destroy the country and make slaves of the people. The great English poet, Lord Byron, joined this expedition and wrote a fine poem called "The Isles of Greece," showing how the free spirit of brave Englishmen could not leave that noble country, with its heroic history, a prey to brutal Turks. He pictures a modern Greek saying to himself, as he thinks of the famous battle of Marathon, in which a small force of Greeks conquered a great army of Persians :—

"The mountains look on Marathon,
And Marathon looks on the sea ;
And musing there an hour alone—
I dreamed that Greece might still be free ;
For—standing on the Persians' grave—
I could not deem myself a slave !"

And the Greeks were not allowed to become slaves to the Turks, for Admiral Codrington sank the Turkish fleet in the harbour of Navarino ; and Greece became a free self-governing kingdom.

It was some time, however, before they got the right

sort of king for it. They first tried the German Prince Leopold, who had married the only daughter of George IV, the Princess Charlotte, who was heir to the British throne. But both she and her baby-boy died before her father, to the great sorrow of the whole people. Prince Leopold, however, refused to become King of Greece, afterwards becoming King of the Belgians, when their country had been separated from Holland, to which Napoleon had joined it. Then another German prince was made King of Greece, but he ruled it so badly that the crown was at length taken from him and given to Prince George of Denmark, brother of our noble Queen-Mother, Alexandra.

Amid other important things that were done in this reign were the building of a great tunnel under the Thames in London, and of the new London Bridge ; and also the opening of Regent's Park, and the famous Zoological Gardens, or " Zoo," in that city. It was then, also, that Sir Robert Peel formed the splendid police force of London, which is famous for the order in which it keeps that great city, and whose members are often called "*Peelers*" or "*Bobbies*," after him.

Sir Robert Peel went into office on the death of Mr. Canning, with the Duke of Wellington to help him ; and many people thought that, because they were Tories, they would not be willing to make the reforms that were so much needed for the poor starving people. But just as the two Pitts, though belonging to the Tory party, had seen that some changes were needed for the good of Britain, so did Sir Robert Peel. One of the first changes they made was to pass a law that no citizen should be prevented, by his religious belief, from becoming a member of Parliament. Then many people

desired a greater reform still in electing the Parliament, which Mr. Pitt had wished to bring about fifty years before. And just then another "revolution" occurred in France, which drove the King, Charles X, into exile, because he did not rule as the people desired, and set another King, Louis Philippe, in his place. These events made many of the English more anxious for the Reform of Parliament, as what would be best for Britain and its Empire.

About this time George IV died, and as his only child had died before him, his brother William, the "Sailor King" succeeded him. William IV had been trained as a seaman, and had married a truly good Princess, who now became Queen Adelaide and was a great favourite with the people. King William believed in making the Parliamentary Reform wanted, but the Duke of Wellington would not agree to it, and in consequence he and the Tories went out of office, and the Whigs came in with Earl Grey as Prime Minister. On the first of June, 1832, this Parliament passed the famous "Reform Bill," which took away the right of sending members from fifty-six old deserted boroughs, where scarcely any voters were left, and allowed the larger towns and cities to send members according to the number of people in them.

And it was also agreed that all men owning or holding some land or occupying small houses, should have the same right to vote that their rich neighbours had. Thus the House of Commons at last became—even more fully than Simon de Montfort had dreamed of—six centuries before—a fair expression of what the whole people generally desired.

This was a great measure, but in the following year,

during the premiership of Lord Melbourne, a still greater one was passed—that which crowned the labours of Wilberforce, and wiped away, forever, the disgrace that any men or women should remain slaves under the British flag. This measure had been strongly opposed by the planters or land-owners in the East India Islands, who had depended on their slaves for tilling their land. But all the right-thinking people in Britain felt that slavery must be ended, and as they did not wish to do injustice to any one, the sum of twenty millions of pounds, or a hundred millions of dollars, was paid to the planters to make up their loss. And now no one can remain for a moment a slave under the British flag.

Several other things were done at this time to improve the condition of the people. A new Poor-law was passed, to make better provision for the destitute poor, and as there had been a great many children without any school to go to, public or national schools were established, since it was plain that unless children were trained in good principles while they were young they could not be good citizens when they were grown up. As we have also seen, the first railway was opened about the time when William IV became King, and this mode of conveyance soon proved itself the best and easiest way of carrying people and goods from place to place. Another thing done was to lower the rates of postage, which had been so high that poor people could hardly afford to write to their distant friends, and the beginning of our present cheap postage was due to the efforts of a good man named Rowland Hill.

Some sad events also happened before the King's

short reign came to an end. One of these was a widespread outbreak of Asiatic Cholera in Britain and other countries, almost as alarming and fatal as the Plague had been long before. But, like that, it had some good effects, for it made the people generally take much more care to keep their houses and cities cleaner than they had done before, and so prevented such diseases as cholera and small-pox from being in the future nearly so common or so hurtful as they had been before.

Another unfortunate event was a "Rebellion" that broke out in the two Provinces of Canada, about the same time. In Lower Canada it grew from jealousies and quarrels between the French Canadians and their British fellow-citizens, in which there were faults on both sides. In Upper Canada, it arose out of long-standing grievances, which were partly due to the way in which the land had been distributed, and partly to the determination of a few of the richer settlers to keep all the power in their own hands—like the rich landowners of Britain in the past. The Governors sent out from England sided too much with the ruling party; and though the people had a Parliament, they found that they had no power to carry out its decrees. Reports sent to London seemed to have no effect, probably because the Government there was too busy with other matters to understand the state of things beyond the sea. In both Provinces there were hot-headed leaders, and as there were few troops in Canada just then, an armed rising took place in both Upper and Lower Canada, which it cost some bloodshed and nearly two years to put down. However this did some good; for the British Government saw that it must let the loyal Canadians govern themselves, just as

loyal Britons did at home. Lord Durham, an able and patriotic nobleman, was sent out to make strict inquiries into all causes of discontent, and on his return he made such a full and clear "Report" that Canadian affairs became much better understood. In time, everything was settled on a foundation of good and free government, the two Provinces were united, under Lord Sydenham, into one country, and Canada became the loyal and contented colony she has ever since remained.

In the meantime many people in Britain had been feeling more and more the hardship of the Corn-laws, and a number of the best men of the country banded themselves together into an "anti-corn-law League," headed by two famous Englishmen, Richard Cobden and John Bright, a noble Quaker whose name has long been revered in England. These two men, along with others willing to help them, went up and down the country holding meetings at which they urged the people to vote for doing away with the Corn-laws. Sir Robert Peel was then at the head of the Government, and though he was leader of the old Tory party, now called "Conservative," he felt more and more that it was wrong to uphold laws which made the bread of the poor so dear as to keep them in danger of starvation.

Just then there happened a dreadful famine in Ireland. The potato-crop utterly failed, and as the people could get no potatoes, and were not able to buy bread, many died of starvation, and a great deal of money was collected to help them. In Belgium, Holland, Sweden, and Denmark, the potato disease had also deprived the people of their usual food; but there

grain from other countries was allowed to be freely sold. Sir Robert Peel proposed that the same thing should be done for Britain and Ireland, but none of his Cabinet would agree to this except three—the Earl of Aberdeen, Sir James Graham and Sidney Herbert—names to be remembered with honour. But the whole country was stirred up, meetings were held in every town; *The Times*, now become a great newspaper, came out against the Corn-laws; and the Whig leader, Lord John Russell, sent out an address to the City of London—declaring that the Corn-laws must go!

Sir Robert Peel called his Cabinet together again, and told them that they must agree to put away the Corn-laws. But two of the members resigned rather than do this, and others showed so much unwillingness that he determined to resign office, much to the distress of the good Queen Victoria, then reigning, and most anxious to see the Corn-laws done away with. But it was not long before Peel was recalled to office, with young Mr. Gladstone in his Cabinet. And though bitterly opposed by most of his party, he was firm in doing what he thought was right, and brought into Parliament, in June 1843, a Bill to do away with the cruel Corn-laws.

But the enmity of those who opposed him was so bitter, that they drove him out of office again—just as his Bill had passed the House of Lords. He resigned office with great regret, but in his farewell speech he spoke some noble words which should not be forgotten, and have, no doubt, been often fulfilled!—

“ It may be that I shall leave, in those places which are the abode of men whose lot it is to labour and earn

their bread in the sweat of their brows, a name remembered with expressions of goodwill, when they recruit their exhausted strength with abundant and nourishing food—the sweeter that it is no longer leavened with the sense of injustice ! ”

The Corn-laws went out of power on January 31, 1849. On the previous evening, a great meeting was held in the Manchester Free Trade Hall, at which were assembled two thousand people who had helped to get the taxes taken off the people's bread. Shortly before midnight a band began to play the air—"There's a good time coming." Just before the clock struck twelve, there was a dead silence, and at the first stroke, the Chairman exclaimed—"It has come !" Then the great crowd sprang to their feet, and ushered in the "good times" with a deafening British cheer. And no doubt they then remembered the name of Sir Robert Peel.

This scene, however, took place during the reign of our late beloved Queen Victoria, to the beginning of which we must now go back. But we must not overlook another notable event which occurred during the reign of William IV. This was the destruction of the old Parliament buildings at Westminster, which took fire, one night, from some unknown cause, and were totally consumed. Westminster Hall, however, which, as we have seen, was built by William Rufus and rebuilt in still greater splendour by Richard II, and in which so many famous events have happened, was left untouched ; so that we may still to-day admire its great vaulted roof and noble space, and recall some of the most striking scenes in the history of the British Empire. It is now joined to the beautiful

pile of the modern Parliament buildings, which has risen on the ashes of the old ones, and is one of the most imposing public buildings in the world, worthy of our great British Empire, of which it is the centre and the home.

CHAPTER XLIX

QUEEN VICTORIA AND ALBERT THE GOOD

1837-1856

THERE had been so much evil and so many troubles in Britain for so many years, that the long and happy reign of the good Queen Victoria came as a blessing to the Empire, bringing much lasting good in its train. It was a happy event for Britain when Edward Duke of Kent, the next heir to the throne, married, in 1818, a young widowed Princess of Germany, to whom, seven months before the Duke's death, there was born a little daughter, Victoria, whose name we all love and revere.

The Duke of Kent had been a brave and devoted soldier, and had served in Canada, at Gibraltar, and in the West Indies. His daughter was proud of his good service to the Empire, and used to say that she had been taught to consider herself a soldier's child. The first home of the baby Princess was Kensington Palace, in London. At the time of the Duke's death, which took place at Sidmouth, in Devonshire, the Duchess and her little daughter were with him, and would have had some difficulty in travelling from Sidmouth to London after the sad event had it not been for the kind assistance of her uncle Leopold,



Photo: Hughes & Mullins, Ryde.]

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afterwards King of the Belgians, who, from the first, took a fond and fatherly care of the little orphan Princess. In after years he recalled "that dreary journey, in bitter cold and damp weather, when he "looked very sharp after the poor little baby, then about eight months old." There was then only a possibility of her succeeding to the crown, and George IV, we are told, would have liked to send her and the Duchess out of the country, instead of to Kensington Palace, where she was brought up by her mother, very carefully, but very simply and quietly.

This quiet early life of the future Queen was very good for her, and saved her childhood from the dangers of the flattery of a Court. She was trained in habits of simplicity, self-sacrifice and obedience, the best training for her high station. From her earliest years she was a "truth-teller," like King Alfred, and—for thorough goodness and devotion to the welfare of her people—her reign was more like his than that of any ruler who had come between them. The Duchess of Kent carefully looked after her education, and provided her, at the age of five, with an excellent German governess—the Baroness Lehzen—who continued to be her faithful friend and counsellor, even after she became Queen. In a speech which the Duchess made at Plymouth to the people who came to welcome her, she said that she was trying to fit the Princess—now thirteen years old—for her future station; that she would be taught that the "spread of religious knowledge and the love of freedom was the best way of securing a country's well-being, and that the power of the Crown should be used to protect the liberties of the people."

The Princess did not know that she was next heir

to the Crown, till she was about eleven, when a chart was placed in her hands which showed her that—if she lived—she would some day be Queen of Great Britain. She was much impressed, and exclaimed simply—“*I will be good!*” This early resolve guided her whole future life, and made the Victorian Age—as the period of her long reign is called—a blessing, not only to Britain but to the world at large, for it proved the best and happiest age that Britain has ever seen, and full of many noble influences which are moving the world still.

The Princess Victoria came of age on her eighteenth birthday, the twenty-fourth of May, 1837. A few weeks later, she was awakened early one morning in June, to hear that her uncle, William IV, was dead, and that she was now Queen. The scene has often been pictured by pen and pencil, when the fair young girl, fresh from sleep, arose to meet the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Lord Chamberlain, who told her of her new dignity, and addressed her as “Your Majesty.” From that moment, her whole life was changed. She left her schoolroom and her studies to preside at Councils of State, and discuss the affairs of the Empire with the wise men of her Cabinet. Her Uncle Leopold carefully explained to her how she should act as Queen, and—from the first—she devoted herself, earnestly and faithfully, to fulfil her royal duties. She was not, however, crowned till the following year, when her Coronation took place, with great splendour, in Westminster Abbey. And—notwithstanding the “hard times” in Britain just then—the whole country seemed delighted with the grace and sweetness of the fair young Queen, and the natural dignity with which she went

through the long and trying ceremony. The State of Hanover had been ruled by the Kings of Great Britain since the time of George I, but as the laws of Hanover do not permit a woman to govern it, the Queen's eldest uncle now became Elector. The British people were glad to let it go, and the Queen had quite enough to think of in the affairs of her great Empire. It was unfortunate that some of the troubles mentioned in the last chapter had now to come up for settlement, but she found a most kind and considerate friend in her Prime Minister, Lord Melbourne, who tried to make the task of governing as little burdensome as possible. The worst thing that happened during the first years of her reign was an unjust war with China, which had arisen out of the selfish determination of British traders to force the opium of India into that country, whose ports were just beginning to be opened to British trade. The Chinese Government, knowing opium to be most destructive to the people, had forbidden it to be brought in, but as it was one of the chief products of India, the traders persisted in smuggling it in, and this forced upon the British Government a disgraceful war which has been deplored by good people ever since. At its close, Britain received from China, as a port, the then desert island of Hong-Kong, on which the great and busy city now stands.

There were also the troubles connected with the settling the affairs of Canada, as has been already explained, in a way which laid the foundation of the vast Dominion which now stretches from the Atlantic to the Pacific. And there were some riots at home, proceeding from the discontent caused by the hard times, and the desire of many people that all should

have votes for Parliament, which they believed would make the country more prosperous. However the "Reform Bill," already described, along with another passed a few years later, giving votes to many more people, settled this question for many years to come.

Early in the year 1840, there occurred a most happy event both for the Queen and for Britain. This was her marriage with her cousin, Prince Albert of Saxe Gotha, who for the next twenty-two years shared her life and the burden of her royal cares, and proved her most loving and faithful counsellor. He was handsome and clever, with a noble, unselfish disposition, which well fitted him for his position as Prince Consort. He not only helped the Queen in many ways that lightened her cares, but he really spent his life in seeking the good of the people she governed. He planned and carried out many needed improvements, in the houses of the people, in the farming of the land, in promoting knowledge of all kinds and the love of beautiful things, and—above all—in standing up for what was right and true and kind in all things, so that Britain owes to him most of the noblest progress of the Victorian Age. One of his most successful plans was that of the first World's Exhibition, held in London in 1851. Being anxious to promote peace and industry, it was he who first thought of bringing the nations of the world together in friendly rivalry, to show specimens of the useful and beautiful things produced by each. For this purpose, a large building made of glass, called the Crystal Palace, was set up in Hyde Park, and still stands at Sydenham, near London. When it had been filled with many wonderful things brought from all

parts of the world, it was opened on the first of May, 1851, by the Queen and Prince Consort, in the presence of vast crowds from all nations. It was the most wonderful and beautiful ceremony that had ever been seen in Britain, and Queen Victoria wrote of it, in great delight—"It was the happiest day of my life!" A few weeks later, Prince Albert made a noble speech at a meeting held to celebrate the existence—for a century and a half—of a Society for sending the Gospel of Christ into foreign countries, showing that he believed religion and industry should go hand in hand in securing the peace of the world. It was no wonder that the Queen wrote of her noble Consort,—“People are much struck with his great powers and energy; his great self-denial and constant wish to work for others are so striking in his character. But it is the happiest life. Pining for what one cannot have, and trying to run after what is pleasant, invariably end in disappointment.”

This may be called the happiest period of Queen Victoria's life. For she was happy in her husband, in her growing family of lively children, and in her good government and hopes of continued peace, notwithstanding some troubles now and then arising in India and other distant parts of the Empire. She and the Prince visited Ireland, now quiet and peaceful, and were received with great delight by the warm-hearted people. They also visited Scotland, and spent some time in the old historic palace of Holyrood, to the great satisfaction of her Scottish subjects. She was so charmed with the beautiful scenery of the Highlands and the hearty affection of the people, that she built a delightful palace at Balmoral, where she used

to spend part of each summer, as a change from her favourite country home at Osborne, in the Isle of Wight, to which she loved to escape, from regal pomp and ceremony, and live the simple homely life she loved best. But more troubled and anxious times were drawing near. Meantime, however, there had been great progress in Britain in many ways. Discoveries in science had added much to the conveniences and possibilities of life. Steam-ships had now begun to cross the Atlantic, and were being built of iron instead of wood, though at first people would not believe that an iron ship could float. There were brave navigators, too, who made long voyages to explore unknown lands. One of these, Sir John Franklin, tried to discover the North Pole, and went far enough to find out much about the Northern Ocean from Baffin's Bay to Behrings' Straits. But he never found the North Pole, and, with his companions, was overtaken by death from cold and famine in the dreary north land.

Then the electric telegraph—a still greater wonder—was invented in the United States by Morse, and soon came into general use, though it was some time before it was carried through the great oceans, as it is to-day. In 1874 the telephone, which everybody uses now, was invented in Brantford, Canada, by Melville Bell, and only a few years ago, the “wireless” telegraph, a greater wonder still, was invented by Marconi, an Italian. All these things together have entirely changed the travel and the intercourse of the world from what it used to be before the Victorian Age. There were great students of science, too, who wonderfully enlarged human knowledge and ideas. The discoveries of Darwin, Russell Wallace, Huxley and Tyn

dall, the writings of such thinkers as Spencer, Carlyle, Muller, the great histories of Macaulay, Freeman, Froude, Green, Buckle, Grote, Stubbs and Kinglake, all gave people many new subjects for thought. The great novelist, Sir Walter Scott, who has been called the Wizard of the North, because he has given such vivid pictures of the life of his country in long past days, had been succeeded by story-writers like Thackeray, Bulwer, Dickens, Kingsley and George Eliot, while in poetry there were Wordsworth, Tennyson, Browning, and so many others that England seemed to have become again—as in Queen Elizabeth's time, “a nest of singing-birds.” Mr. Ruskin was one of the greatest writers of this time, and taught the people by his writings to love what was beautiful in nature and art, and what was right and good in conduct. And there were great painters like Turner and Landseer and Watts and Holman Hunt, who filled the English galleries and halls with fine pictures, all of which provided the British nation with much of the best kinds of enjoyment. There were great preachers, too, such as Robertson and Maurice and Stanley and Newman in England, and Chalmers and Norman Macleod and Guthrie in Scotland, for the teaching and uplifting of the people. And early in the century there was formed the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, and laws were made to protect the dumb creatures from thoughtless cruelty, which had never been done before.

The years from 1838 to 1866 were eventful ones for England, as well as other European countries. The year 1848 was one of great troubles throughout Europe, between the people and some of their rulers, who re-

fused to grant them the freedom they were determined to have. Britain and Belgium were the only kingdoms undisturbed, because in both there were freedom and good government. In France Louis Philippe, like George III, was obstinate and unwise, so the people rose and proclaimed a Republic again, at the head of which they afterwards placed Louis Napoleon, a nephew of the great Buonaparte. Louis Philippe and his Queen escaped to England, where Queen Victoria gave them the palace of Claremont to live in, and treated them with great kindness. The French King died two years later, and in the same year Sir Robert Peel died from a fall from his horse, much respected by the Queen as an able and faithful Minister. About the same time, too, the poet Wordsworth passed away, having been made poet-laureate of England because of the noble poetry he had written, and the young Alfred Tennyson was appointed to that honour in his place, and held it till his death, near the close of Queen Victoria's reign.

In 1852 the great Duke of Wellington died, and Tennyson wrote, in memory of his brave deeds, the famous Ode which contains the motto on our title-page—

“Not once or twice, in our fair island story
 The path of duty was the way to glory !
 . . . His work is done,
 But, while the races of mankind endure,
 Let his example stand,
 Colossal, seen of every land,
 And keep the soldier firm, the statesman pure,
 Till, in all lands and through all human story,
 The path of duty be the way to glory !”

The “Iron Duke” was mourned and missed by the

British nation at home and abroad, and was honoured by a grand funeral and splendid tomb in St. Paul's Cathedral. For all felt that—to the victories of this true hero—the country owed forty years of peace, which, strange to say, came to an end with his long and active life. Various causes of anxiety had been troubling the Queen and her Ministers during the previous years. The Prime Minister, at that time, was Lord John Russell, a good and able man. But the Foreign Secretary, Lord Palmerston, was too much inclined to meddle in the affairs of other countries, and on several occasions went much farther in this direction than the Queen approved. One of these occasions was when Louis Napoleon, suddenly, and by deeds of great violence, seized the chief power in France, after which, before the end of the year, he took the title of Emperor, and showed signs of following the example of his uncle towards other powers. Lord Palmerston was at this time unwise enough to express approval of his course, on which account he was dismissed from office, though he afterwards became Premier. About this time there arose between France and Russia a dispute about the guardianship of the Sacred Places in Palestine, which it had been the object of the Crusades to take from the Turks. Russia claimed the care of them for the Greek Church, and France for the Roman Church. Besides this, both England and France had become afraid of the growing power of Russia, knowing that her Government wanted to have the Turkish dominions divided among several European kingdoms, and Britain suspected that she had designs on India, and wanted to get possession of the countries that lay in her way. So, when Russia

placed a body of her soldiers in one of the rich corn-growing countries on the bank of the Danube, over which she claimed some rights, Britain was ready to join France in opposing her, and Louis Napoleon was glad to distract the attention of the French from his own usurpation, by leading them into war, of which they were so fond.

There were many people in England who did not think it was right to engage in a war of this kind, and there are many to-day who think it was a great mistake. But both the Government and the people generally were bent on the war, and the British and French fleets were sent to the East in the summer of 1853. Then the Russians sunk a Turkish fleet at a place called Sinope, and the British spirit was roused to instant action. And although neither Austria nor Prussia would join in the war, yet the King of Sardinia, Victor Emmanuel, afterwards King of Italy, agreed to help Britain and France against Russia.

There was some fighting between the Russians and Turks during the summer of 1853, in which the Turks were beaten, which increased the British desire for war, and in September of that year, the great army of the Allies—nearly sixty thousand strong—was sent across the Black Sea to the Russian Province of the Crimea, where there was a fine harbour and a strongly fortified town called Sevastopol. The fleet was commanded by Sir Charles Napier, and the land forces by Lord Raglan and Prince Napoleon, brother of the new Emperor.

It was so long since Britain had really been at war, that her army was hardly strong enough, or sufficiently prepared, for such a war as she now had on her hands.

She had no experienced generals like the Duke of Wellington, and at first the troops suffered much from lack of supplies, such as bedding, blankets, clothing, and even good and sufficient food—this being due partly to the carelessness, and even the dishonesty, of those in charge of such matters.

Yet the spirit of the British soldiers was as brave as it had been at Waterloo, as was soon seen in some of the sharp conflicts they had to wage. In September, 1854, they gained a victory over the Russians at the river Alma, on the way to Sevastopol. Soon after, there was a gallant fight at Balaklava, in which took place the famous Charge of the Light Brigade, which Tennyson has described, once for all, in words that will never be forgotten while the English language lasts :—

“Forward the Light Brigade !
Was there a man dismayed ?
No—though the soldiers knew
Some one had blundered.

“Theirs not to make reply,
Theirs not to reason why—
Theirs but to do and die.
Into the valley of Death
Rode the Six Hundred.

“Cannon to right of them,
Cannon to left of them,
Cannon in front of them
Volleyed and thundered !

“Stormed at with shot and shell,
Boldly they rode—and well—
Into the jaws of Death,
Into the mouth of hell,
Rode the Six Hundred.

“ Stormed at with shot and shell,
While horse and hero fell,
They that had fought so well
Came through the jaws of Death,
Back from the mouth of hell,
All that was left of them,
Left of Six Hundred ! ”

Shortly after this fatal but heroic charge, the two armies, English and French, began the Siege of Sevastopol, making a ring round it, while the Russians did their best to drive them away, by attacking the fortified camps. A large body of British troops, including the famous Guards, were encamped on the Heights of Inkerman, opposite the town, and there the Russians planned to make a fierce attack. Before daylight on a dreary, rainy November morning, the British sentinels heard a dull, rolling noise, which proved to be a vast force of Russian soldiers, dragging with them ninety guns, in the hope of taking the troops by surprise. The shots fired by the sentries at the outposts, awakened the sleeping British force, and all rushed out—muskets in hand—in the darkest hour before day, to fight an invisible enemy, without leaders or word of command. Officers and men fought shoulder to shoulder, each simply doing his best in his place, while shot and shell were poured upon them through the darkness, till the dull, faint light of dawn began to appear. Even then the thick fog was so dense that no one could see five yards before him, or could tell where or how many the enemy were, which way they were marching, or how the fight was going ; so that even the best general could not have given orders. But the soldiers knew that Britain

expected them to do their duty, and they did it well.

The fighting on that dreary Sunday morning was terrible all along the line, but the Guards had the worst of it. For here the Russians, like the French at Hougomont, came up in mass after mass, on the British line, and fought with splendid courage and plenty of ammunition. But the Guards had soon used all their supply, and were obliged to trust to their bayonets, while their ranks were not only broken up by the volleys of the enemy, but torn with grape-shot and shell from the English guns. At one time they were driven back by sheer exhaustion, leaving all their officers and half their men on the field. But as soon as they had time to breathe again, they made a furious charge back, and regained the lost ground.

For hours this frightful battle raged, but at last some French troops came up to help the British; and both fought so well that the Russians—many and brave as they were—gave way and retreated pell-mell into Sevastopol. This was the hottest battle of the war, and has been called the Soldiers' Battle, because the common soldiers did it all themselves, without leaders, and by sheer courage. And the brave men who did it were the remnant of three British divisions, cold, wet and weary with severe toil, and half-famished besides, while some of them had within a short time previously lain for forty-eight hours in the trenches at a stretch.

There was a great deal of suffering at that time among the sick and wounded, for lack of any proper care, as indeed there had been in many wars before. But a noble-hearted Englishwoman named Florence Night-

ingale, who had learned how to nurse sick people, offered to go out to the Crimea to look after the poor suffering soldiers. She at once opened hospitals, and saw that the sick had the comforts and help they needed, and her splendid work in the Crimea not only helped the British army greatly, but also made the beginning of the great helpful work which trained nurses and the Red Cross Society have done since, all over the world. Florence Nightingale died in 1910, honoured—as she deserved—both by King and people.

The Crimean War did not bring much good to either Russia, France or England, though it brought much suffering in its train. But the great dispute between Russia and Turkey, which—being a bad and despotic Government, was much given to acts of oppression and cruelty, particularly towards her large Christian provinces—was not settled until many years afterwards, and is scarcely settled yet. Yet as the Turks are now beginning, like other nations, to insist on having a free Government and a real Parliament to conduct the affairs of the country, we may hope that the “Eastern Question”—as it has long been called—will not still continue, as in past years, to disturb the peace of Europe.

CHAPTER L

THE GREAT INDIAN MUTINY AND ITS HEROES

1856-1859

AFTER Warren Hastings—you may remember—Lord Wellesley had been a great and wise ruler of Britain's growing empire in India. The Marquis of Dalhousie carried on the work of extending the power of Britain over the native tribes, and adding to the British Empire in India large territories which had been badly ruled by their native princes. The last state taken under British rule in this way was that of Oude, and it was thought unjust even by some of the British in India, though it seemed necessary both for protecting the poor natives from cruelty, and the British power from danger.

But some of the Indian princes were very much enraged at losing the great power they used to have; and it was upon the native Indian soldiers, or Sepoys, that the British power chiefly depended. At that time, there were only 45,000 European soldier troops in all that great country, while there were more than a quarter of a million of Sepoys fighting under the British flag. If all these should have revolted, they could easily have driven all the English out of the

country ; but they had been very well trained by British officers, and, in general, made very faithful and useful soldiers. Many of them, however, were men of high " caste " (or class), who had come from Oude, and disliked the British occupation of that country, partly because they knew that the British would not let the chiefs force so much money out of the very poor people. And they were also afraid that they might be sent to fight for Britain beyond the sea, according to an order which had been issued, and they could not do this without losing caste, which meant disgrace among their own people.

Moreover, as the people of India are greatly attached to their old ways, and dislike change, they did not want the new inventions which Lord Dalhousie brought in, such as railways, telegraphs and post-offices, of which they were afraid, because they did not understand them. Many Hindus were, also, very unwilling to give up their cruel heathen customs, such as the practice of burning widows alive with the dead bodies of their husbands. And because these were now done away with, and because the good missionaries who came to preach the Gospel to them were Christian Englishmen—they feared lest the British Government should compel them to give up their heathen beliefs and become Christians, though there was no idea of interfering with them in any way.

Then some of the former native rulers who had lost their power were secretly trying to persuade a number of the Sepoys to resist the British power, although, when Lord Dalhousie gave up office, everything seemed quiet and peaceable. But Lord Canning, who succeeded him as Governor, became seriously uneasy in regard

to the difficulties which he too truly foresaw. The secret discontent was doing its mischievous work when the unhappy war with Russia began. And as that lasted so long, and it sometimes seemed as if the Russians would beat the English, many of the Sepoys began to think that they might be able to beat them too if they tried. Moreover, there had been an old prophecy that the rule of the British in India would last just a hundred years, and many of the people believed that it was now about to come to an end.

While the natives, and especially the Sepoys, were excited with these disturbing ideas, which would probably have brought about a mutiny sooner or later, an unfortunate thing happened, which was like a match set to a train of gunpowder.

An old English musket called "Brown Bess" was given up, at this time, for a new kind of rifle, in which greased cartridges were used to fire the shots. Many of the Sepoys believed, or were made to believe, that these cartridges were greased with the fat of cows or pigs, which their religion forbade them to touch. The British officers tried to convince them that this was not the case, and in some places the men believed this, and were satisfied. But at a city called Meerut, where there were three regiments of Sepoys, eighty-five of the men refused to touch the cartridges offered to them. The commanding officers said that they must be tried by a Court-martial of their own native officers, who condemned them to imprisonment for ten years, with hard labour ; and their fetters were most unwisely put on before the whole of their regiment, on parade—a deed which stirred up their comrades to fury.

The next day was Sunday, the tenth of May, 1857,

and about the time when the British soldiers were going to Evening Service, a troop of mounted Sepoys galloped to the gaol where their comrades were confined and set them free. Then all the Sepoys there rose in arms, killed eight of their English officers, with their wives and little children, burned down their homes, and being driven to flight by the British troops of the garrison—they hastened to the old city of Delhi, to join in the great mutiny which had been planned at that ancient capital of the old Mogul empire. There were enough British soldiers at Meerut to have prevented or immediately punished these cruel deeds. But the General in command was incompetent, and the officers generally had been determined not to believe in the impending danger. Indeed the British Prime Minister, Lord Palmerston, had to the last refused to believe that there was need for more British troops in India, although Queen Victoria herself had felt much anxiety about it.

After that there came a very sad time for the poor people shut up in Lucknow, as also for many others in the north-western part of India, where the mutiny prevailed. In various places where there were few British soldiers, the Sepoys rose against their officers, and killed them and many of their wives and children with savage cruelty. But everywhere, even amidst the greatest horrors, the English, whether strong men or delicate ladies, showed the brave spirit of their race; and the British soldiers—officers and privates alike—fought with the same heroic courage that won Waterloo.

Perhaps the most interesting and heroic story of that terrible time was that of the Siege of Lucknow,

a large and beautiful city, the capital of Oude, the last State annexed to the British Empire. The General in command there was Sir Henry Lawrence, a brave and good man, who being also a wise man, and knowing India well, had seen trouble coming for fourteen years before. He had been trying for some time to make the large buildings of the Residency, where he lived, strong enough to resist a siege, and also to collect all the ammunition and provisions that he could procure. As soon as he heard of the outbreak at Meerut, he gathered into the Residency all the British people in the place, as there was no fort there in which they could be safe from their enemies' guns and shells. The Residency was only a very large house, in a garden, with several other houses about it, but the soldiers fortified the enclosure as well as they could, and there, for more than five months, a few hundred Europeans held the horde of savage foes at bay. During all the time, we are told that never one second passed without shot or shell falling on some part of it. Every house was to some extent shattered, and the walls seemed marked as with smallpox. Many died of sickness as well as wounds, and all had to live on very short rations. More than a hundred ladies with little children were crowded into the Residency and had to share all the sufferings and privations with the rest, some of them doing their best to help and comfort the wounded and dying. About a month after the siege began, Sir Henry Lawrence was struck by a shell, in his room, and died two days after. He had lived and died devoted to the best interests of British India, and asked that on his tomb the words should be engraven—"Here lies Henry Lawrence, who tried to do his duty!"

But another English hero of this sad crisis was thinking of the suffering people at Lucknow, and planning to rescue them. This was Sir Henry Havelock, a truly good man, and a brave and tried soldier, who had already fought in four campaigns, though he had never before this had the chance of commanding a force on the field. He at once mustered all the British troops at his command, never more than fifteen hundred men, about one thousand being British and the rest brave and loyal Sikhs. These faithful troops were sometimes called Havelock's "Ironsides," because, through the influence and example of their commander, they had become—in courage, endurance and good conduct—very like the famous Ironsides of Cromwell. Havelock led this small force from Allahabad to Lucknow, more than a hundred miles, under a burning sun and through a country swarming with foes, so that five out of every six men perished on the way!

One of the places on their line of march was the city of Cawnpore, on the bank of the Ganges, one of the strongest British posts in India. And to it belongs the saddest tale of the Mutiny. Some three thousand of the troops there were natives, and only about three hundred British, besides whom there were about a thousand Europeans in the city, while the native town numbered sixty thousand. The old commander at the post, when the Mutiny broke out, sent to Sir Henry Lawrence for help, which he could not possibly give. Then, feeling the case desperate, he applied to a native chief called Nana Sahib, who turned out a cruel enemy, having long had a great grudge against the British. At first he pretended to be willing to help the terrified English people, but he soon showed himself their most

merciless foe. As there was no fort in the place, which was at the mercy of the rebels, Sir Hugh Wheeler tried to fortify an old military hospital surrounded with hastily built mud walls that would have crumbled away before any determined attack. Within these miserable intrenchments were packed about one thousand people, men, women and children, who were much more wretchedly situated than the people in Lucknow, for most of them had nothing but the shadow of the low walls to shelter them from the burning sun, and the only water within reach was drawn from a well which was constantly under fire. Still the brave Englishmen fought on with desperate courage, till both food and ammunition were running short, and they knew they would soon have to yield. Then the crafty Nana Sahib, who feared their holding out till rescue came, persuaded them to trust to his promise that he would let them depart in safety, with boats and provisions sufficient to take them all to Allahabad. But as soon as they had come out and embarked on the boats which they thought were to carry them to safety, the Sepoys set fire to the boats, shot nearly all the men, and took the women and children—about two hundred—to a wretched prison.

Havelock and his men, while still on their march, heard these tidings with grief and indignation, and—believing that the captives were still alive—they hastened on, determined to rescue them at any cost. But when the cruel Nana Sahib heard the guns of the advancing troops, he sent savage men into the place where the women and children were shut up, to murder them all, and throw their bodies into an old well. There they were found by Havelock and his men, who

were almost maddened by the sight, after fighting two battles in one day, and putting the brutal chief and his Sepoys to flight. They were, however, now too few and too much exhausted to go on to Lucknow at once, and had to wait until more troops should come to their aid.

This did not happen till September, when General Sir James Outram, who had been fighting in Persia on some quarrel of the East India Company, arrived with a strong force of British troops, and the little army, now nearly three thousand strong, marched out of Cawnpore, and gained another victory over the Sepoys. At the end of two days, they were within sixteen miles of Lucknow, still fighting their way on. Even when they had got within a mile of the distressed English people, there was long and furious fighting all through the big city. Around the Residency where they had been shut up so long, there was a mass of narrow lanes and tall houses, filled with Sepoys, who fired from every possible point on the advancing troops, who fought with heroic courage against fearful odds. The gallant Seaforth Highlanders, who had been in the forefront of every battle for three months past—led the way undaunted, up the long narrow street that led to the gate of the Residency. Many of the brave men dropped by the way, but still the column pressed on while Havelock's clear voice called out "Forward! Forward!"

At last a loud British cheer rang out from the front ranks, which had just got a sight of the gate of the Residency, with white English faces looking eagerly down from above it—faces of those who had been listening anxiously all day to the distant noise of

battle, and heard, at last, the welcome sound of the Highland pipes playing "The Campbells are coming!" The sun was down and darkness drawing on, but they could still make out the leaders on horseback—the foot-soldiers in their shirt-sleeves, and the Highland kilts;—and then came the last fierce rush—right into the gates of the Residency!

The joy of the rescuers and the rescued may be imagined, but never fully told. Mrs. Harris, the wife of a chaplain who lived through it all, and was a minister of comfort to the sufferers about her, has described the scene for us, how the wayworn, bearded soldiers took the little children in their arms, kissing them with tears running down their cheeks, and thanking God that they had come in time to save them from the fate of those killed at Cawnpore; while the mothers could not do enough to show their gratitude, getting water and tea for the tired and thirsty men, and pouring out their heartfelt thanks. But the leaders of the rescue missed the brave and good Lawrence, whose foresight had enabled the small garrison to hold out so long.

Yet the siege of Lucknow was not ended till the following November, for Havelock and Outram had not men enough to drive the Sepoys away, and were shut up there till more British soldiers could arrive. But it was not easy to spare these for Lucknow then, for it took a long time for men to be sent all the way from England, and there had been far too few in India. But Lord Canning had, however, wisely and promptly stopped some British regiments on their way to fight in China, where there was not nearly so much urgent need for them. So as Delhi, the centre of the Mutiny, was the most important point of attack, a small

British army of 30,000 men was collected before this great stronghold of the mutineers, and kept up the famous Siege of Delhi with the same heroic courage and endurance as the men of Havelock and Outram had shown; though the intense heat of the sultry summer days and the pressure of sickness and fever filled the hospitals and greatly weakened the army. A young Artillery officer, Frederick Roberts, whom we now know as Lord Roberts, the best beloved military hero of our own time, and Commander-in-Chief of the British army, won there his first laurels.

It would take much more space than can be here given, to do any justice to the hard-fought Siege of Delhi. Two generals lost their lives, and a third resigned his command before it was ended, at last, by a heroic assault, the soldiers pushing on and climbing scaling-ladders under a furious hail of shot and shell—many of them falling into the trench below, while their comrades boldly pressed on to fill their empty places. It was only after days of this desperate fighting that the ancient city and the old King were once more in British hands. His life was spared, though, after trial, he was sent finally to a Burman prison. His three sons, who were captured by a British officer named Hodson, were shot by him on the spot, without trial—a deed which was afterwards justly condemned. For there was such a passion of horror and anger among the English in India and at home by the barbarous deeds of the Sepoys, that men were apt to forget—what the famous Minister, Disraeli, said at the time—that a Christian nation has no right to lower itself to the level of a savage one, nor a British officer to imitate a wretch like Nana Sahib.

In November the bodies of troops sent off with all haste from England arrived in India, under the brave Sir Colin Campbell, of the Crimean War, afterwards known as Lord Clyde. He lost no time in leading a strong force to Lucknow, taking Cawnpore from the enemy on the way. Roberts was the first to notify the defenders at the Residency that relief was at hand, by placing on a high building a flag which was twice shot away before it could be fixed in its place. And, about a month later, he won the great honour of the Victoria Cross by his heroic rescue of the colours of his regiment. There was another meeting of mingled joy and sorrow, when Sir Colin Campbell and Roberts, under a shower of shot and shell, met the heroes of the siege, Havelock and Outram, who had so gallantly kept the fierce enemy at bay during the long months of constant fighting. Outram was still strong and in good sprits, but Havelock, who was much older, was worn out with the strain and anxiety he had borne so long, and died before the British marched out of the city, bearing with them the dead body of their noble General, who had fallen—said Sir Colin Campbell—"a martyr to duty," and had found, like so many of our heroes, that "the path of duty is the way to glory."

It was only in March 1858 that Lucknow was at length completely reconquered by British arms, and this may be said to mark the end of the Mutiny, though in some places the natives still continued in rebellion. One of those who bravely fought to the last in what she doubtless considered the cause of her country, was an Indian princess, the Ranee of Jhansi—a sort of Indian Boadicea, whose body, scarred with numerous wounds, was found on the field, and who was called

by the British General in command, "the best man on the side of the enemy."

Other Indian princes, however, proved faithful to Britain all through that terrible time, and were duly rewarded when peace was restored. Some severe things were done in the punishment of the chief mutineers, such as blowing them from guns, a thing condemned by many; but Lord Canning was both wise and merciful in his treatment of the people and the country, and well earned his title of "Clemency Canning," in restoring peace and order to the harassed country. The year after the Mutiny closed, the East India Company's reign came to an end, and India was placed entirely under the rule of the British Government. In course of time, Queen Victoria received the title of Empress of India—meaning that she not only ruled over the actual British dominions, but that she was sovereign, also, over several independent native states. Ever since then India has remained peaceful and—in general—content under the just and merciful sway of the British Government—the first real justice and mercy the country has known for ages. But it was long before the sad memories of the Mutiny faded out of British hearts and homes, or India itself. Among other memorials, a chapel in a beautiful garden now marks the scene of the fatal spot where so many English ladies and children were cruelly murdered—martyrs to the growing greatness of the Empire;—a spot which will always remain sacred for true British hearts.

CHAPTER LI

GENERAL GORDON AND NORTH AFRICA

1859-1885

ABOUT four years after the year of the Indian Mutiny—on December 14, 1861—Queen Victoria, while still mourning the recent death of her devoted mother, had to bear the great sorrow of her life in the loss of her beloved husband, Albert the Good. He had been only a few days really ill, and this sudden and crushing loss left the Queen desolate indeed. For the rest of her life she had to bear not only the loneliness of widowhood, but also the greater pressure of State cares, which her noble husband had done so much to lighten. Heart-broken in her grief, she bravely strove, to the close of her long life and reign, to fulfil faithfully to her people the great duties to which God had called her.

The Prince of Wales, then about twenty-one, had, shortly before, returned from a visit to Canada, where the people had joyfully welcomed their future King. The Princess Royal of England had been married to Prince Frederick of Prussia, who afterwards became Emperor of Germany. Besides her two eldest children the Queen had three sons and four daughters, several of whom afterwards became princes or princesses in other

countries. These were the Princess Alice, afterwards Princess of Hesse, Prince Alfred, afterwards Duke of Saxe-Gotha, Prince Arthur, afterwards Duke of Connaught, Princess Helena, afterwards Princess Christian, Princess Louise, afterwards Duchess of Argyle, Prince Leopold, who died young, and Princess Beatrice, now Princess Henry of Battenberg.

Not long before the death of Prince Albert, a civil war had broken out between the northern and the southern parts of the United States. This arose—partly at least—from a strong difference of feeling concerning African slavery, which the Northern States were very anxious to abolish in the republic, while the Southern ones wished to retain it, as they thought it very useful to them. Fearing that they would have to give up their slaves, the Southern States determined to secede from the Union, which the others would not permit, and a cruel war soon began. The Northern States expected the sympathy of Britain, which had so lately abolished slavery throughout the Empire, and were disappointed when the British Government agreed to consider the Southern States at war, instead of in rebellion, and decided to remain neutral. The Southern States, who had been at first very successful, sent two “envoys,” or representatives, to Britain, who—while on their way—were taken by force from the British mail-steamer *Trent*, by an American Government vessel. This was contrary to the laws of nations, and caused great excitement both in Britain and in the United States. And though the two envoys were afterwards placed on a British war-vessel, and reached England safely, the affair excited much bad feeling and might have caused another unhappy war, if the British Government

had not been very wise and patient. It was one of the last acts of Prince Albert's life to revise, in the interests of peace and good will, an important State paper sent to the Government of the United States, in such a way as to promote a friendly settlement ; and this has been esteemed one of the greatest services which he rendered to Britain and to the world.

During the excitement in both countries arising out of this event, some uneasiness was felt in Canada lest the United States—if it should quarrel with Britain—might turn the large army it now possessed against Canada. And after the close of their civil wars and the death of the hero-President Abraham Lincoln, some raids were made by disbanded soldiers of Irish origin, which called out fourteen thousand volunteers to defend their country. Then it became strongly felt that the British provinces should not remain separate from each other, so close to a great and strong country like the United States. This had been pointed out long before, both by Lord Durham and the U.E. Loyalists. But—in those days—there were no railways thought of, and it would have been difficult for scattered provinces, separated by great distances, to feel really united. But now that some railways had been built, and many more were possible, a strong movement began among patriotic Canadians for the “ Federation ” (or union) of the British provinces, which was headed by three chief leaders, Brown, Cartier and Sir John A. Macdonald. The British Parliament approved the Union, and passed an Act to settle it ; and the first of July, 1867, became the birthday of the great Dominion of Canada, ever since kept as a holiday. The four provinces just then united were those of Nova Scotia

and New Brunswick, first settled, to a great extent, by French, Scotch and U.E. Loyalists; Lower Canada or Quebec, as we have seen mainly French; and Upper Canada or Ontario, so bravely peopled and defended by its loyal British settlers. It was hoped that Newfoundland, the oldest province of all, would have joined the Federation, but owing to a number of difficulties she still stands alone. Prince Edward Island, British Columbia, and the new province of Manitoba joined the other four provinces, shortly after their union, thus extending the bounds of Canada from the Atlantic to the Pacific. And—except for a shortlived outbreak of rebellion among the Half-Breeds of Manitoba, arising mainly out of misunderstandings—all these important changes were peacefully accomplished.

As time passed on, the “Great Lone Land” of the North-west was explored and opened up, the mountain ranges were pierced and spanned by railways, and rich treasures of gold, silver and other minerals were found in the deep valleys and by the rushing mountain streams. Large numbers of immigrants from both Europe and Asia have flocked into these inviting lands, and into the great wheat-fields of Manitoba, becoming loyal British subjects. The new provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan have been built up in the wilderness, while New Ontario, as the northern part of what was once Upper Canada is now called, unexplored fifty years ago, now attracts thousands yearly by its mineral wealth. Large steamers, sailing weekly, connect Canada’s western ports with India, China and Japan, while a fleet of Atlantic steamers form her highway to Europe. So fast has Canada grown since Confederation, that while, at that time, her people numbered

only three and a half millions, she has now about eight millions, nearly as many as Britain possessed at the time when the thirteen American colonies forsook her Empire. Canada, therefore, bids fair to maintain her claim to be the eldest daughter-nation of Britain, distinguished no less by her loyalty than her numbers, and living in peace and friendship with her great neighbour to the south, as she has done for the century now past.

But happy and peaceful as was the reign of Queen Victoria, in the main, her Government was hardly ever free from war in some part of the world-wide empire. After the Crimean War, however, Britain did not take part in any of the European wars of later years, out of which most important and interesting changes have come to pass. Her old ally, Prussia, grew into the strong empire of Germany, whose present Emperor is the son of Queen Victoria's eldest daughter. A war between Germany and France ended in the downfall and exile of the second Napoleon, and in France again becoming a republic. Austria and Hungary were united under the Emperor Joseph. Long-divided Italy became, in the year of Prince Albert's death, a free and united kingdom, through the heroic efforts of two great Italian patriots, Garibaldi and Cavour. Poland struggled bravely for her freedom, but is still ruled by despotic Russia. Little Denmark, from which came our Queen-mother Alexandra, keeps her ancient place in Europe, and Sweden and Norway, for a time united, are now once more divided—a British princess being now Queen of Norway. A long-standing warfare between Russia and Turkey ended, partly through British influence, in setting free from Moslem

misrule some of the smaller countries which it had cruelly oppressed. Since then, both Russia and Turkey have attained a degree of free government, though as yet it is far from being the freedom which we have seen gradually wrought out in our own empire.

But nearly all the fighting done by Britain during the last half of the nineteenth century took place in Africa—a continent as yet barely mentioned. If we look at any of the older maps of Africa, we find the middle of it one great blank space. For so little was known of it formerly, that it was called “the Dark Continent,” and the interior was long supposed to be one vast desert. Yet the countries on the shores of the Mediterranean Sea were known from the earliest times of which we have any history. And Egypt, in particular, as we may see from our Bibles, had its kings and its cities long before Greece or Rome was heard of.

About the time when Nelson, by his victory of “the Nile,” prevented Buonaparte from seizing Egypt as the shortest way to India, a Turk called Mehemet Ali rebelled against the Sultan of Turkey, to which Egypt then belonged, ruled it himself during the rest of his life, and conquered a vast country to the south of it, called the Soudan, twice as large as France and Germany put together. He would have liked to become master of Turkey also, and gave some trouble, during the first years of Queen Victoria’s reign, to Britain and other Powers which were opposed to his designs. His grandson, Ismail Pasha, was like him in ambition and love of power, and in order to get money for the luxury and splendour which he loved, he ground down the poor people of the country to the last degree,

till the unhappy Egyptian peasants were said to be the most wretched in the whole world.

Egypt was a very hot and dry country, except at the time when—as we are told in Scripture—the Nile “overflows his banks in time of harvest,” and brings moisture and more soil to add to its fertility. At such times the people tried to save as much water as possible, which they kept for watering their fields in the time of drought. Now this water was public property, yet a much larger share was allowed to the rich than to the poor, so that the peasants had a hard time of it in trying to raise the crops on which they depended, which was one of the great wrongs from which they suffered.

One very useful enterprise was, however, carried out under Ismail's rule. This was the Suez Canal, connecting the Mediterranean with the Red Sea, so that ships can now sail straight through, from England to India, without going round Africa, as they used to do in old times. This Canal cost a great deal of money, and the peasants were forced to work at it, just as their ancestors, many ages before, were compelled to build the Pyramids. When it was finished, there was a splendid celebration, to which came the Empress of the French, and other grandees of Europe. But it left Egypt burdened with so heavy a debt, that Britain had, at last, to pay a large portion of it, thus getting control of the Canal, which has proved of great use in sending troops and merchandise to India. The journey can now be made in a month, whereas in the time when Robert Clive went to India, it used to take six months at least.

During the rule of Ismail, an Egyptian peasant-

soldier, named Arabi Bey, seized the Government, and as the British wished to restore Ismail's authority they sent a fleet to Alexandria to keep order. Arabi was foolish enough to turn the guns of the forts on the British ships, which then bombarded them, and took possession of the city. After this, it was felt that Britain must rule until order was quite restored, and the British General Wolseley was sent to Egypt with a large army of British and Indian soldiers. A battle was fought at a place called Tel-el-Kebir, when Arabi and his followers were turned out of their stronghold, and the British troops conquered Cairo, the capital of Egypt.

When Wolseley and his army were recalled, a garrison of ten thousand British troops was left behind to keep the country quiet. And as it was clear that the Egyptians were not able to rule their own country wisely, a British Agent was sent to reside in Egypt in order to secure the interests of Britain, as well as the improvement of Egypt itself. The first Agent was Lord Dufferin, once Governor-General of Canada, who pointed out the best ways of training the Egyptians to govern themselves. His successor, Lord Cromer, carried on his work, and did much for the good of Egypt and its people, the greatest thing being his success in raising the poor, down-trodden peasants to a condition of some comfort and self-respect, so that even the soldiers began to fight more bravely out of love to their country, instead of being driven, in chains, to battle! By his efforts many wrongs were righted, and the taxes laid more equally on rich and poor. The water saved from the overflowing Nile was more equally divided, and a great dam was built, high up

the Nile, from which a vast region—formerly dry and barren—was watered and made more fertile.

Mr. Gladstone was, about this time, Prime Minister of Britain, and had much to do with the events just related. He was one of the greatest Englishmen of the century—a man who hated wrong and tyranny and war, and loved right and freedom and peace, with all his heart. He would never let the country begin or continue war, unless he thought it necessary to prevent some greater evil, and though he made mistakes, such as all men are apt to make, his name and fame will go down with the best and the greatest in the honour roll of British patriotism.

The great country called the Soudan lay—as has been said—south of Egypt, between the Red Sea and the Desert of Sahara. It was peopled partly by a peaceful race of negroes, partly by fierce Arabs who were slave-traders. Ismail Pasha had tried to put down that cruel trade, and for this purpose he sent into the Soudan country a brave Englishman, whom we now know by the honoured name of General Gordon, a “hero of heroes” as Mr. Gladstone truly called him. Acting as Governor, he made great and successful efforts to do this; but unhappily—worn out with unceasing labours—he was obliged by failing strength to give up his command too soon.

Two years after this, a man named Mohammed Ahmed, a teacher and leader of the Mohammedans, raised a revolt of the Arabs, and set himself up as a Prophet, taking the title of “the Mahdi” (or Forerunner of the Messiah), and calling on all faithful Moslems to rise and do his bidding. By and by this rising extended to the borders of Egypt itself, and these

fierce Arabs, who called themselves Dervishes, killed great numbers of the Egyptian troops, being deluded into thinking that by such deeds, they were pleasing God and making sure of heaven. At one time five thousand, and at another two thousand, of these poor soldiers were slain, in the murderous onslaughts of the Dervishes.

The British Government, while greatly regretting these events, did not feel disposed to send out an army to undertake the conquest of the Soudan. The port of Suakim, on the Red Sea, was, however, occupied by British troops, and it was felt by Mr. Gladstone and his colleagues that something must be done to save garrisons there and in the interior, as well as the thirty thousand people and seven thousand Egyptian troops in Khartoum, from the merciless Arabs. Who should be sent to undertake such a task? It was proposed to send a brave and able Egyptian named Zobeir, but he had been a fierce and brutal slave-hunter, and Gladstone would not use such a man. He knew with how much success General Gordon had fought the slave-hunters before, and a message was sent to the General, to ask him if he would go, at the risk of his life, to save Khartoum and the people whom he knew so well, and whose trust he had won. Gordon did not hesitate a moment. Though he was at Brussels when the message reached him, he was in London the next day, got his orders from the Government, and that same evening set out for Khartoum.

All that one man could do Gordon did. The people gladly welcomed him as their deliverer and their hope. He cheered them by his courage and his faith, brought the wavering back to their loyalty, sent away the sick

to a place of safety, and fortified the miserable defences as well as it was possible to do. He raised their hopes by promising that help should come to them from Britain, as he believed it would ; and refused to think of deserting the helpless and trusting people, come what might !

As the spring advanced, the Mahdi and his horde of Dervishes began to close round Khartoum, and both famine and treachery threatened the anxious garrison. Gordon kept them together by his influence alone, for he was the only European officer there, and the only capable leader of these poor Egyptian soldiers. For three hundred and seventeen days he held his post against the growing power of the Mahdi, always hoping for the succour without which it became clear that he could not save his charge. Many a morning and evening he kept his lonely, anxious watch from the tower of the old palace in which he lived, scanning the distant stretch of desert and river for some sign of the coming of the British force so eagerly expected. But the weeks and months passed, and he looked in vain !

Yet during much of this time many people in Britain—and in the Colonies too—were full of anxiety for Gordon himself, alone in the midst of foes, and were urgent that an army should be sent to help him. And although the Government had been determined not to go to war for the Soudan, Lord Wolseley received orders to take out a strong force to rescue Gordon. But it was no easy task to transport an army speedily from London to the remote town in the African desert. For months the British generals at home disputed as to the best way of doing this. Should they choose the toilsome transport over the burning desert, with half-

starved camels, or should they venture the still more dangerous ascent of the Nile? When the expedition was at last ready to start in October, Wolseley divided his army into a "desert column" and a "river column," both of which had to fight their way through foes, losing two of their generals, although the troops were victorious. The river journey was a struggle with dangerous rapids, sand-banks, treacherous rocks and as treacherous foes, and was as heroic an example of British pluck, perseverance and devotion to duty, as any that our history can boast, even though it sadly failed in fulfilling its main object.

For when General Wilson, at the head of the desert column, at last reached the Nile, and was able, on January 26, to embark a small force on two small steamers which Gordon had sent to meet them, he was already too late, for on that very day Khartoum had fallen. And when the anxious British rescue party reached the spot, a single cannon-shot greeted them, instead of the shouts of joy for which they had hoped. They soon knew that they were too late for the rescue for which they had toiled so long!

The Mahdi, knowing of the British approach, had decided to retreat, but first he made a last desperate attack on Khartoum. The defences were weak and the garrison were famished; and—worse still—it is said there was a traitor in the camp. A gate was burst open, and the Dervishes poured in. General Gordon calmly met his foes on the steps of the Governor's Palace, and fell at his post, pierced by many wounds. But his steadfast faith and noble, unselfish character have won for him an undying renown. In St. Paul's Cathedral in London, to-day, many a teacher halts his boys

before the black marble tomb, close to the stately sarcophagus of the "Iron Duke," which bears the effigy (or statue) of General Charles Gordon. There the boys can read that "he saved an empire by his warlike genius, that he ruled vast provinces with justice, wisdom and power, and died in the heroic attempt to save men, women and children from imminent and deadly peril"; and also that "at all times and everywhere, he gave his strength to the weak, his substance to the poor, his sympathy to the suffering, and his heart to God." Nowhere shall we find a nobler British—because Christian—ideal of a true hero!

It was three years before the Soudan was entirely subdued. For though the Mahdi died soon after Gordon fell, he left another leader, called "the Khalifa," more fierce and cruel than himself. But the very people who at first followed him, afterwards entreated the British forces to come and save them from him. He was conquered, at last, by Lord Kitchener—as we now call him—with an army of 26,000 British troops against 40,000 Dervishes, who fought most bravely and almost all died in the battle, as the Khalifa himself died fighting shortly after.

The Soudan is now governed by the British and Egyptian Governments together, and both flags fly over Gordon's old palace. The country now possesses railways, as well as steamboats, and at night the streets of Khartoum are lighted with electric lamps. A better light, however, should shine from the Gordon Memorial College and other schools founded to educate the young Soudanese, but more especially from a beautiful cathedral, lately erected to extend the influence of those great Christian principles which

inspired the devoted and heroic life of Gordon of Khartoum.

It would be too long a story to tell of all the different ways in which great part of North-East and West Africa was brought, bit by bit, under either the rule or the protection of the British Empire. The "Dark Continent" had been gradually penetrated by one brave explorer after another. The first who entered it from the Western side was the famous young Scottish traveller, Mungo Park, who has left very interesting stories of his wanderings among these remote regions and simple savages. He was the first to find out the course of the Niger river; but before he had finished this great work, he was, unfortunately, drowned with his companions in the Cataract of Broussa, on that river. Shortly before this happened, Sir Joseph Banks, who, as we have seen, was trying to people Australia, formed the African Association also, and Mr. Wilberforce and his friends tried to form a colony of freed slaves at Sierra Leone, which did not succeed; though there now exists there a flourishing town, chiefly peopled by former slaves who have become free. In time other rich regions of Africa were taken and settled; and by making treaties, partly with the natives, partly with the Dutch, Danes, French and Portuguese, the British Empire now rules or protects—in West Africa, Gambia, Sierra Leone, the Gold Coast Colony, Ashanti, and Northern and Southern Nigeria. From these come many things valuable to the rest of the Empire, such as gold, ivory, rubber and cocoa, while the natives receive, in return, many articles which they desire, along with the great blessings of Christian light, just government, peace and order.

In 1858 a British traveller named Burton discovered the great lake Tanganyika ; and eight years later, two others named Speke and Grant explored the Victoria Nyanza river, and the rich and beautiful country of Uganda, inhabited by a very superior race of savages who wore clothes and were somewhat civilized, but were governed by a fierce and cruel king named Mtesa.

Two famous explorers—Sir Samuel Baker and Henry Stanley—were the next to visit the country, and the Missionary Society of the Church of England began to send Missionaries there. But the cruel king murdered one of the first, the devoted Bishop Hannington, and—for the time—drove away the poor native Christians. Then Germany tried to secure Uganda, but the strong Missionary interest in Britain prevented it from being forsaken by Britain, which finally secured a “ Protectorate ” over it. Uganda has now become a thriving Christian state, and the British protectorate includes, in addition, Bantu and Somaliland farther north, with the large island of Zanzibar—all in process of improvement under the fostering care of the British Empire.

In 1258 a British traveller named Burton discovered the great lake Tanganyika; and eight years later two others named Speke and Grant explored the Victoria Nile river, and the rich and beautiful country of Uganda, inhabited by a very superior race of natives who were somewhat civilized, but were governed by a fierce and cruel king named

CHAPTER LII

THE STORY OF SOUTH AFRICA AND THE BOER WAR

WE come to the story of South Africa last of all, because in it happened some of the latest and most important events in the history of our great British Empire. The first that we know of South Africa is, that a Portuguese explorer named Diaz, who had been trying to find a way to the East, by sailing southward, in 1487 came upon the great headland now called the Cape of Good Hope. He met with a terrible storm while rounding it, and proposed to call it the Cape of Storms. But his master, the King of Portugal, said, "Not so! call it, rather, the Cape of *Good Hope*, for by this cape we shall sail to India." And, ten years after that, another Portuguese mariner, Vasco da Gama, did sail round it all the way to India, (which took two years and two months), and a Portuguese poet, named Camoens, wrote a famous poem about this, called "The Lusiad." During this voyage, he came upon another fine harbour which he called *Port Natal*, because he reached it on Christmas Day.

After that, many other sailors, Spanish, Dutch, English and French, followed the same course to India. Sir Francis Drake came upon the Cape of Good Hope



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during his voyage round the world in his ship *The Golden Hynde* in 1580. He called it "the fairest cape we have seen in the whole circumference of the earth." It is no wonder that he thought so, for he saw, towering three thousand feet into the clear blue sky above him, a vast square mass of granite, with a sugar-loaf height to the east and two smaller rounded hills to the west; while at its feet lay the beautiful Table Bay.

As time passed, both the Dutch and the English East India Companies found Table Bay a very convenient place for a half-way seaport. About 1655 a little Dutch colony of about a hundred people came to settle there. They built a small fort, planted gardens, cultivated little farms, and bought sheep and cattle from the little yellow-skinned Bushmen or Hottentots whom they found there, and whom these settlers at first treated kindly and fairly.

By and by there came also settlers from France. At the time when Louis XIV drove out of his kingdom his Protestant subjects—the Huguenots, many of them took refuge in Holland, a number of whom accepted the offer of the Dutch to give them new homes at the Cape of Good Hope. Being steady and industrious, they got on very well, though the Dutch did not treat them, very generously; and when the poor Huguenots found themselves forbidden to have their children taught their own dearly loved French language, they began to feel as if they had only left one kind of tyranny for another.

When the nineteenth century began, these Dutch and French settlers numbered about twenty thousand people. They lived a life shut out from the rest of the world, for the Dutch East India Company would not

allow them to trade with any country—not even with Holland—directly, or to have any voice in the management of their own settlements. They hardly knew what their laws were, and there was not a printing-press in the country. Then, too, they were slave-holders, which kept them from growing better, and their language by degrees became a rude and scanty sort of speech called *Taal*, and as they had hardly any books, the people were, of course, very ignorant and rather stupid. As they were all farmers, they got the name of *Boers*, from the Dutch word for farmer, or peasant.

When the Treaty of London ended the war between the Dutch and the English, this Cape Colony, along with Ceylon and part of Guiana, became part of the British Empire. At that time there were more than seventy-three thousand people in the Colony—about a third of these being European and the rest Hottentots and slaves. The Governors sent out from Britain did what they could to improve the condition of the people, by providing schools and better laws, as well as by bringing in better kinds of sheep and cattle. But wars soon began with the Kaffirs and other dark-skinned natives, which made it very difficult to keep these in order except by making treaties with their chiefs.

It was a great help in this, when Christian missionaries came to preach the Gospel of Peace among these poor savages, just as Aidan and Cuthbert had done, long before, in Britain itself. The Moravians were the first there, as they had been the first elsewhere. The London Missionary Society sent out others, who did much to keep the whites from oppressing the natives. In the northern wilderness, called Bechuanaland, the famous Robert Moffat preached everywhere among the

despised Hottentots, and greatly helped them to lead better lives and keep good order in the country.

After Moffat came his still more famous son-in-law, the great Scottish Missionary, David Livingstone, one of the true heroes of our Empire. At the age of ten he was a busy little worker in a Scottish cotton-mill. By his steady industry he managed to obtain a College education, and at twenty-seven he went to Africa as a medical missionary. There he married Mr. Moffat's daughter, and took up his work among the natives, among whom he journeyed far and wide. He was the first white man to explore the unknown Nyasaland, inhabited by the Matabele and Makololo tribes, and bravely fought the battle of these simple natives against the slavery which the Dutch Boers (as they were called) would have forced upon them. He won the trust and affection of the natives wherever he went, and the noble work done by him and other missionaries was of great use to the British Government in making and keeping peace with the natives, and teaching them to grow industrious, prosperous and civilized. Livingstone made several long journeys to explore the vast unknown country, and wrote a most interesting book about his extensive travels. Like many other people, he was very anxious to find out where the river Nile came from, and while trying to do so, he was once so long unheard of that many people feared he was lost in the African wilds. But he was found at last by a Welsh American named Henry Stanley, who had once been a poor little work-house boy, but, by being brave and steady, became a famous man, on account of this and other great things that he did. When he found Dr. Livingstone, it was just in time to save his life, for the provisions he and

his men had taken with them were almost done. Livingstone and he had a joyful meeting, but the brave missionary would not leave Africa, to which he had given his life, and he died there, alone, about a year later. His faithful negroes carried his body all the way to the sea, where it was taken on board a British ship, and buried, amid the remains of other British heroes, in Westminster Abbey. But his work still lives in Africa. Not only were schools established for the natives whom he first taught, but a College has also been founded for them, and so great has been the progress that many of them can now do as well as any whites at ordinary trades.

One of the first British Governors of Cape Colony, Lord Somerset, after seeing the beautiful and fertile country to the north-west of it, brought five thousand English and Scottish immigrants to settle there. One of these, named Thomas Pringle, wrote some fine poems about the country, and did a great deal to improve its condition. Having seen for himself something of the evils of slavery, he returned to England, and worked hard for seven years after, in company with Wilberforce, Clarkson and Lord Brougham, to bring about the great blessing of its abolition in 1834.

But this reform, great and good as it was, brought loss and inconvenience to the Boer farmers, who were behind the age in everything—not knowing how to work their farms without their slaves, and did not like to be controlled in their treatment of the blacks. Unwilling to submit to British laws, they began to pack up their household goods into their great canvas-covered waggon, and travel—or “trek”—as they called it—away from their comfortable homes into the wide, wild coun-

try beyond. This had been laid waste by a fierce king or chief of the Zulu tribe, named Chaka, who is said to have caused the death of a million of the other natives, and to have made the country of Natal a desert for thousands of miles. The Boers who wished to settle there met with many perils from the warlike Kaffirs and Zulus, and it often happened that the settlers had to escape with their lives, losing both their dwellings and their cattle. Yet they bravely stayed on, making new homes and building villages in that wild land.

For some time they suffered much from a false and cruel chief named Dingaan, who had killed and succeeded the fierce Chaka, and who at first pretended to be friendly, but seized his opportunity to murder many of their best men. But at last Pretorius, their famous leader, utterly defeated Dingaan, killing three thousand of his followers. Pretorius then declared Natal the property of the Boers, who, for a time, had it all to themselves.

But by and by quarrels arose between them and the natives who lived on the borders of Cape Colony, and there was so much disorder in consequence, that the English took possession of Durban, the capital (named after a former English Governor); and an agreement was made by the burghers to submit to British rule. Many of the Boers, however, did not like this, and soon began to move away again, to new settlements beyond the Vaal river, which in time was called the Transvaal Republic. Pretorius insisted that here, at least, the Boers should be considered independent of the British Government, or else he would raise a revolt among the Boers still living under British rule.

The British people were by this time tired of the

weary Kaffir wars, and did not care—just after the sad Crimean war—to send soldiers to contend with the Boers in Africa. So it was agreed that they should have their own government, both in what was called the Orange Free State, and, beyond that, in the Transvaal Republic. Besides these two Dutch republics, there were now the three British provinces of Natal, British Kaffraria and the great Cape Colony, which in time had its own Parliament, like that of Great Britain. The Boer republics were not nearly so free, for only the original “burghers” were allowed to vote, and they managed things to suit themselves.

Sir George Grey, a wise British Governor, saw that it would be much better if all these different provinces and republics could be “federated” or joined together under one government; and if this could then have been done, it would have saved, in the end, much misery and a long and destructive war. But there were several changes in the British Government at the time, which brought changing counsels, and unhappily delayed this wise plan. Then there occurred a very unexpected surprise in the finding of diamonds at a place called Kimberley, on the borders of Cape Colony. It was something like the story of Ali Baba in the Arabian Nights’ Entertainment; for a trader, visiting a Boer farmhouse, had a white stone shown to him which turned out to be a very precious diamond. Soon after another, which was called “the Star of Africa,” and was worth twenty thousand pounds, or a hundred thousand dollars, was found by a Hottentot.

As soon as this wonderful news was spread abroad, numbers of people hastened to the spot, to hunt for the precious stones, which were found to be very abundant,

and were packed in a kind of "blue earth," which filled the old craters and hollows of four dead volcanoes. The British Government bought this land from the chief of a tribe called Griquas, who claimed it as his. Afterwards it was found out that it really belonged to the Orange Free State, to which the British Government paid a large sum of money for it; besides spending a good deal more in building a railway to the place. As digging for diamonds required a great deal of machinery and money, which many of the individual miners did not possess, all the different properties there came at last into the hands of a great company, mainly through the management of the famous Cecil Rhodes, who had been one of the first to arrive there, and had become very rich and powerful.

After that there arose a great deal of trouble between the Transvaal Boers and the Zulus, on account of a strip of land which each claimed, and the British Government was asked to decide the dispute. The Zulu Chief, or King, was a brave soldier named Cetewayo (or Ketchwayo), who had learned much about war from the British, and was determined to fight for the rights of his people. As some of the Transvaal Boers wished the British Governor, Shepstone, to take the republic under his protection, he hastily set up the British flag at Pretoria, just before another Governor, Sir Bartle Frere, arrived to push on the Union or "Federation" of South Africa. He also brought the British decision that the disputed land really belonged to the Zulus, but instead of making this known at once, he kept it from Cetewayo for some months, and when he did make it known he ordered the Zulu chief to disband his army at once. This

made Cetewayo very angry, and he at once made war upon the British forces, which were taken by surprise. Nearly a whole British regiment fell before the attack of the Zulus, who seized all the supplies of the expedition. The colony of Natal was saved from ruinous invasion only by the brave resistance of about a hundred British soldiers, under Lieutenant Chard, who fortified an old Mission house, at a place called Rorke's Drift, with flour-bags and biscuit tins, and—with a loss of only fifteen or twenty—drove back an army of four thousand Zulus, who left three hundred dead on the field.

Two months after Natal was thus saved, the British forces defeated the Zulus in two battles, which ended the war. Cetewayo was sent a prisoner to Capetown, but some years later was restored to power. His people, however, would not obey him then, on account of his defeat, and Zululand was at last annexed to Natal under British rule.

Notwithstanding all the troubles that had come in the way, Sir Bartle Frere still tried to bring about the union of the colonies. But the Transvaal Boers, many of whom did not wish to be under British rule, were now anxious to insist on their independence, and their leader, President Kruger, persuaded the rest of the Dutch colonists to refuse the proposed union, until the Transvaal Republic should have gained its end. Sir Bartle Frere was recalled, and before the arrival of his successor, afterwards known as Lord Rosmead, the Boers of the Transvaal had risen in arms, and defeated the British forces, with the loss of a brave commander, at a place called Majuba Hill.

The British Government, with Mr. Gladstone as Prime Minister, felt that the situation was a very serious

one, for there was so much discontent among the Dutch generally, that there seemed to be great danger that Britain might be brought into a miserable war with the whole Dutch people in Africa. And as Mr. Gladstone had supported the right of the Boers to be independent if they chose, and rightly abhorred the idea of another cruel war, it was decided that the Transvaal Boers should have the independence too hastily taken from them fully restored and acknowledged.

This was probably a just thing to do in itself, but if the state of South Africa had been better understood at the time, it would not have been done just after a British defeat, and when there were enough troops in Africa to maintain British authority. An agreement was, however, carefully drawn up, by which the natives were to be protected from slavery, and all British people residing in the Transvaal were promised exactly the same rights as citizens, which the Dutch themselves enjoyed. Unhappily, through the carelessness of some official in London, this agreement was so incorrectly written out, that many disputes and much trouble arose afterwards in consequence. And coming events soon altered the whole condition of the little republic in a way that could not then have been foreseen. Britain was however recognized as the "Paramount" (or chief) Power even in the Transvaal, and British rule as supreme over all South Africa.

But President Kruger, of the Transvaal Republic, who was very narrow-minded and obstinate, and disliked the wise and just British rule, did not show himself willing to help Lord Rosmead to keep order among the Boers and natives in the neighbouring Bechuana-land, when they refused to obey the Queen's commands.

and he even issued a proclamation putting it under the rule of the Transvaal. This Britain could not allow, and Sir Charles Warren, with a military force, partly from Natal, declared British rule over Boers and natives alike.

In the very next year, 1886, the state of things in the Transvaal was wonderfully changed by the finding of gold in the slopes of the eastern mountains. The place where it was most abundant was called the *Witwaters-rand* (or white-water slope), and has since been generally known as "the Rand." Then there was a rush of miners and gold-hunters, which in a short time built up a "city of the golden reefs," named Johannesburg (pronounced Yohannisberg). In ten years this city had more than a hundred thousand people living in it, of whom more than half were Europeans, while great quantities of gold, worth many millions of dollars, were taken out of it in one year. Gold was found, also, in the country to the north—supposed to have been the land of Ophir, to which King Solomon sent for gold—in which lived the warlike Matabele and the peaceful Mashonas. Cecil Rhodes got leave to search there for minerals, and afterwards got up a company to bring settlers and trade to what is now called by his name—the British province of Rhodesia. Railways were taken up, farms were laid out, and all seemed doing well, when a fierce Matabele chief named Lobengula began plundering and killing the peaceable Mashonas who were under the Company's protection. As this could not be allowed to go on, the Company's Manager, Dr. Jameson, got authority from the Governor, Lord Rosmead, to take the Matabele capital, Buluwayo, and put Lobengula to flight. A desperate

fight was fought here also, by a party of about twenty British soldiers, commanded by Major Allan Wilson, who, being cut off from their comrades by a river in flood, were surrounded by savage enemies, with whom they fought until their ammunition was done, and they were at last slain—one by one—by the murderous assegais or short swords of the natives. The brave Major fought so gallantly to the last, that the savages were afraid to touch his dead body—one of the many heroes who have helped, in war or peace, to build up the British Empire.

After this, matters seemed to be going well towards a peaceful settlement of African affairs, when foolish obstinacy on one side and impatient rashness on the other aroused bitter feelings which, in the end, brought about the long and sad Boer war. President Kruger, being—as has been said—very self-willed and narrow-minded, was blindly attached to the old traditions of his people, and did not wish to see any change in these. Though he had allowed so many strangers to come and live in his country, and had made much profit out of what they had paid for mining rights and other things, he was determined not to give the “Outlanders,” as they were called, that equal share in the government of the country which the British Government had required, and the carelessness with which the agreement had been drawn up helped him to keep them out of it. He did not like the new ways of the free governments about him, and he wished to keep the Transvaal shut out from the rest. And he was afraid that, if he let the “Outlanders” have equal rights in it, they would end by being too strong for him. They had other things to complain of, also, for as he gave to some of his

own people—according to their old Dutch custom—the sole right to sell the things most needed, therest had to pay much more than they were really worth.

The “Outlanders” made many complaints, and requests for what they considered their rights, and at last some of them grew so impatient of Kruger’s treatment, that they determined to try to get what they wanted by violence, which was very unfortunate; for, at that very time, Lord Rosmead was on his way to Pretoria to try to settle matters rightly, as he might have been able to do, for he was a wise man, much respected by all. But the armed “raid” which was made by Dr. Jameson and some of his friends not only failed utterly, but also made it impossible for Lord Rosmead to do what he had hoped, though the leaders of the “raid” were tried in London and punished for their lawless act.

When Lord Milner succeeded Lord Rosmead in the following year, there was less patience, and more talk of war, which often helps to bring it about. President Kruger was not unwilling for this, for he was very ignorant, as well as proud and obstinate, and as he did not understand how powerful Great Britain really was, he thought that his people might be able to drive British power altogether out of South Africa. For a long time he had been secretly preparing for such an attempt by getting a large quantity of arms into the country, and keeping his young volunteers well trained. It had been thought necessary by the British Government to send troops to the Cape, and as these were unfortunately placed on the frontier, their presence was regarded by the Boers as a threat. Soon after this, on October 9, 1899, President Kruger sent to London

a demand that all troops on the borders should be sent away, and those still on the sea should not be landed, and that all difficulties between the Transvaal and the British Government should be settled by arbitration, as we have seen that some other disputes had been. And if Britain refused to agree to his demands, they would have to be settled by war. Many of the best people in Britain were greatly opposed to beginning such a war, and hoped, to the last, that it might be prevented. Queen Victoria, who—two years before—had held a grand celebration of the sixtieth year of her long reign, and had hoped to end it in peace, was most unwilling to send out her soldiers to fight the brave Boers for the land they had made their own. But the spirit of the British people was too proud to take Kruger's bold demand as anything else than the beginning of a war which, it was generally thought, would not last more than a few weeks. So a large armed force was sent out to Capetown, which was expected speedily to settle the question, and bring the obstinate President to his senses.

But the Boers were far better prepared than the British knew, and their active volunteers, on their swift well-trained ponies, were more than a match for the ordinary British soldier. They had begun the war at once, as they had threatened, and when General Buller arrived with his army, he found that some nine thousand men, nearly the whole British force in Africa, were surrounded and besieged by the Boers in the three towns of Ladysmith, Kimberley and Mafeking. And as the other Dutch republic—the Orange Free State—had taken the side of the Transvaal, it was proving to be no easy task to conquer them all.

General Buller did what he could, in the circumstances, though some sad defeats of his army grievously disappointed the British people at home. One of the saddest of these was a great disaster, in which the brave and good General Wauchope fell, with nearly a thousand men, including a gallant Highland regiment, in trying to drive the Dutch General Cronje from a place called Magersfontein, near the fatal Modder River, where most of these English and Highland heroes lie in one honoured grave. In the colony of Natal, also, matters grew very serious, and there was grief and dismay in Britain when the news arrived of defeat and disaster, instead of the victories that had been so surely looked for.

But the British spirit rose to greater effort, and not in Britain alone. In her far-away Dominions, such as Canada and Australia, where the sons of the British Empire were as true and loyal as at home, many brave volunteers had at once offered their services for the defence of the British flag. And now, when it seemed to be in danger of dishonour, more bands of volunteers went cheerfully forth, from the wide borders of Canada, even from the remote north-western villages, as well as from the plains and valleys of Australia and New Zealand, to uphold the power of the British Empire, and lay down their lives, if need were, in its service.

They reached Africa in good time to give splendid help in winning the long, weary fight, under a great Commander. The young hero, Frederick Roberts, who won the Victoria Cross before Lucknow in the great Mutiny, had—twenty years before—been made Lord Roberts of Kandahar, for his brave exploits in Afghanistan, where there was fighting then on account of some

dispute that had arisen through its nearness to India, and also through the murder of a British ambassador. General Roberts not only took a strong post of the Afghans in a way very like that in which Wolfe took Quebec, but he made a wonderful march, at the head of ten thousand men, over three hundred miles of wild, rough country, through fierce heat by day and bitter cold at night, in order to save a small British force at Kandahar, in danger of immediate destruction. And now, though he was growing old, and his son, young Lieutenant Roberts, had just been killed in the war, Lord Roberts, at the Queen's command, set out once more to cross the sea, and save the Empire in South Africa. With him, as second in command, went another skilful General—now Lord Kitchener—and the arrival of these generals, with the forces under them, soon turned the tide of success.

Three thousand Canadian volunteers, as well as a large body of Australians, took an active share in the war, especially during the first eventful year. After two months' drill, a Toronto Company, under Captain Barker, helped to gain a victory at a place called Sunny-side, without loss to their own force. But their most famous work was done at Paardeberg, where they signally aided the English troops in forcing the brave Boer General Kronje to surrender, and also in clearing the way to Pretoria, though about a hundred and forty men were killed or wounded on the way. Of this exploit it has been truly said by an English writer that it was to that handful of sappers and Canadians that the credit is immediately due for that white flag which fluttered, on the morning of Majuba Day, over the lines of Kronje at Paardeberg. It was a great honour for

Canada that her brave sons should prove thus that, in time of need, she could be a true and helpful member of the British Empire, which had done so much for her; and the memory of those who gave their lives for this noble service should ever be held in honour by her loyal people.

Side by side with their English and Australian comrades, the Canadian volunteers endured all the hardships of the trying march that followed Paardeberg, losing some of their finest young men on the way, while the Strathcona Horse were doing good work in helping to free Natal from the mounted Boers, and a battery of Canadian artillery did some of the finest work in the war; in helping at last to relieve the besieged town of Mafeking.

Britain was filled with rejoicing when the news came of the relief of this long-surrounded town; and about a fortnight later, Lord Roberts entered Pretoria in triumph; and there on June 5, 1900, he hoisted the British flag, and reviewed his brave soldiers. It was hoped, then, that this cruel war was over; but the Boers were too much like the Britons to know when they were beaten, and a long and desolating conflict was kept up for nearly two years more. In the meantime, good Queen Victoria died, in January 1901, to the great sorrow of her people, and it was believed that the distress she had felt over the war, and the sufferings of her "boys"—as she called her brave soldiers—had hastened her death. Four months after her eldest son, the Prince of Wales, had become King Edward VII, PEACE was at last proclaimed—to the joy of the whole Empire; and all South Africa, from Capetown to the Zambesi, became subject to the British flag. The war



Photo: W. S. Stuart, Richmond.]

KING EDWARD VII.

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had cost twenty thousand precious lives, a hundred thousand maimed or wounded men, and more than fifty millions of pounds (about 150 millions of dollars). Well may we hope that it may be the last war that shall ever desolate any portion of our world-wide British Empire !

King Edward VII proved one of the best and ablest kings that the British people have ever had. From his noble mother and his father, Albert the Good, he learned to be "the shepherd of his people," to lead them into the paths of right and peace. He helped on the cause of peace and friendliness in South Africa, as well as throughout the rest of his great Empire ; and wherever he went, in Europe, he tried to keep the kings and the people from going to war about matters which could be much better settled otherwise. Because of this, and of the kindness he showed to all, he won the glorious title of "Edward the Peacemaker," and became so much beloved that he might also be called, like King Alfred—"England's Darling"—titles far higher than any he could have gained by the greatest triumphs in war. And so, when he died, suddenly, after a very short illness, on the sixth of May, 1910, his death was mourned—not only throughout the vast Empire which he had ruled—but over the whole world, wherever the people knew how good and kind a monarch he had been. For true kindness of heart is after all the truest greatness, because it is the greatness of the Divine, which shall never fail.

The British Empire honoured its beloved King by the most magnificent funeral ever known. Nine kings of other countries in Europe came to London to attend it, and besides Lord Roberts and other great generals

and nobles, there followed it people representing all the great Dominions beyond the sea. And—next to the bier—along with the members of his own family, walked the King's favourite horse and faithful little dog, in token of the kindness he showed to dumb animals as well as to human beings. This funeral was what we call a "great object-lesson," showing not only the homage which mankind must, in the end, render to true greatness, but also the unity and loyalty which—rather than forts and guns or even navy—holds together our scattered, world-wide Empire. Wherever the British flag waves—over dusky Asiatics or swarthy Africans, or the red Indians of the west, as well as the Anglo-Saxons of our great Dominions, the tolling of the bells, the booming of the minute-guns, the solemn music of Church-services, seemed to echo round the world, voicing the silent sorrow which drew distant peoples into closer bonds of national fellow-feeling.

The final touch had seemed to be put to this world-wide unity, when King Edward, in opening the British Parliament for the last time, announced with pleasure that the five provinces of South Africa, so recently at war, had agreed to unite, or "federate," into one great Dominion, like those of Canada, Australia and New Zealand, with one central Parliament and Government at Pretoria, the old capital of the Transvaal. It was intended that the Prince of Wales should go out to open the first Parliament, but by the time United South Africa was proclaimed, on May 31, 1910, the Prince had succeeded his father as King George, so that this duty had to devolve on his uncle, the Duke of Connaught. The first Governor of South Africa is

Lord Gladstone—son of the great and good Mr. Gladstone, and its first Prime Minister is the brave Boer General, Louis Botha, who fought long and gallantly on the side of the Boers, but who is now—like the rest of the Boers and Britons—as loyal a subject of the British Empire as he formerly was of his own republic. Sad as was the war, we may all rejoice in its final outcome of peace and freedom.

* * * * *

We have now seen how the small shoot of Saxon freedom, planted in the sea-girt isles of Britain, which front both Europe and the New World, has grown, under Divine Providence, despite all checks, all mistakes, all wrong-doing that kept it back, a mighty tree that bears fruit for the good of the nations. It is a great thing to belong to such an Empire as ours, of which we may well be proud—not because of its mere size or power, but because God has made it a blessing to the world, and because it may yet become a still greater one, as we believe that its new ruler, King George, will try to make it. But it is a greater thing to know that we may and should—each and all—become good citizens of this great Empire, and help to make it greater still! Each boy or girl who reads these pages may do this, by first learning to love and fear God and to practise the truth and right-doing which have made it great; to learn and obey its good and just laws; to fight, first, whatever is wrong in his own heart and soul, and then, by every right and proper means, in the world about him. For there is a far nobler fight always before us than that fought with swords or guns—the “good fight” of right against wrong, good against evil, love against hate. And in this

noble fight we may all be good Soldiers of the Empire !
So—as in the words of a good man, we may sing—

“ Fling aloft the flag of freedom ! we are Britons, every one !
March, boys ! forward ! by the right !
Where are wrongs in need of righting, there is duty to be
done,
March, boys ! forward ! to the fight !

“ In the service of our country we would draw our latest
breath—
March, boys ! forward, by the right !
We are soldiers of the Empire ! give us victory or death !—
March, boys ! forward to the fight ! ”

From “ *Garnered Sheaves.* ” By G. F. JOY.

DATES OF THE MOST MEMORABLE EVENTS IN THE HISTORY OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE

	B.C.
Landing of Julius Cæsar in Britain.	55
	A.D.
Conquest of Britain by Agricola	84
Departure of the Roman Legions from Britain	410
Conquest of Britain by the Saxons	449-547
St. Columba brought Christian teaching to Scotland.	565
Augustine sent by Gregory the Great to convert the Saxons	576
First Landing of the Danes	789
Egbert, King of the West Saxons, gave the name of Eng- land to South Britain	802
Alfred the Great conquered the Danes at the Battle of Ethandune, and made the Treaty of Wedmore	878
Edward the Elder, son of Alfred, ruled all Britain	924
Canute ruled all England	1017-1035
Edward the Confessor succeeded sons of Canute	1042
Battle of Hastings, or Senlac	1066
Conquest of Ireland	1171
King John granted the Great Charter	1255
Battle of Evesham	1265
Battle of Bannockburn	1314
Battle of Crecy (or Cressy)	1346
Battle of Poitiers	1356
Wat Tyler and the Peasant Revolt.	1381
Battle of Agincourt	1415
Wars of the Roses (York and Lancaster)	1455-1485
Caxton brought Printing to England	1476

348 STORIES OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE

Discovery of Cape of Good Hope by Diaz	1487
Columbus discovered America	1492
Cabot landed in North America	1497
Henry VIII Supreme in Church and State	1531
Persecution of Protestants began	1555
Sir Walter Raleigh founded Virginia	1585
Defeat of the Spanish Armada	1588
James VI of Scotland became James I of Britain	1603
The Gunpowder Plot	1605
Beginning of the Civil War	1642
Execution of Charles I	1649
Death of Oliver Cromwell, Protector of England	1658
Restoration of Charles II	1660
The Plague in London	1665
The Great Fire of London	1666
The Landing of William of Orange	1688
The Battle of the Boyne	1690
The Battle of Culloden	1746
The Battle of Plassey	1757
Wolfe took Quebec	1759
Birth of United States of America	1776
The French Revolution Began	1793
The Battle of the Nile	1793
Union of Great Britain and Ireland	1801
Napoleon Buonaparte became Emperor	1804
Battle of Trafalgar and Death of Nelson	1805
Peninsular War	1808-14
Battle of Waterloo	1815
Battle of Navarino	1827
Opening of Liverpool and Manchester Railway	1830
Reform Bill Passed	1834
Abolition of Slavery	1833
Corn Laws Abolished	1846
Great Indian Mutiny	1857
Death of Gordon at Khartoum	1897
Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria	1899-1901
South African War	1899-1901
Coronation of King Edward VII	1902
Coronation of King George V	1911

KINGS AND QUEENS OF BRITAIN

SAXON KINGS OF ENGLAND

Egbert.
Ethelwolf.
Alfred the Great.
Edward the Elder.
Athelstan.
Edmund.
Edred.
Edwy.
Edgar.
Edward ("the Martyr").
Ethelred.
Edmund Ironsides.

DANISH KINGS

Canute.
Harold.
Harthacnut.

SAXON LINE RESTORED

Edward the Confessor.
Harold.

NORMAN KINGS

William I.
William II.
Henry I.
Stephen of Blois.

PLANTAGENET KINGS

Henry II.
Richard I (Cœur de Lion).
John.
Henry III.
Edward I.
Edward II.
Edward III.
Richard II.

LANCASTER AND YORK

Henry IV.
Henry V.
Henry VI.
Edward IV.
Edward V.
Richard III.

HOUSE OF TUDOR

Henry VII.
Henry VIII.
Edward VI.
Mary I.
Elizabeth.

HOUSE OF STUART

James I of BRITAIN.
Charles I of Britain.
The Commonwealth and
Oliver Cromwell, Protector
of Britain and Ireland.

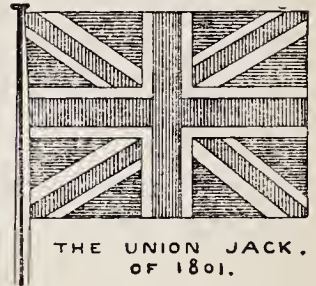
HOUSE OF STUART RESTORED.

KINGS OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND

Charles II.
James II.
William III and Mary II.
Anne.

HOUSE OF HANOVER

George I.
George II.
George III.
George IV.
William IV.
Victoria.
Edward VII.
George V.



THE UNION JACK AND THE BRITISH ARMS

As we all know, our familiar Union Jack—"the flag that braved a thousand years the battle and the breeze"—flies, the whole world over, on every British ship and fort, as the symbol of our Empire's power. It is well to know something of its history, and how it came to be the red-cross flag which it is to-day. Its present form, with its three distinct crosses, dates back only to the beginning of the nineteenth century, the time of the Union of Great Britain and Ireland. The original Cross of England was that of St. George—the Plantagenet standard—dating back to the First Crusade, a plain red cross on a white flag or "field." When James VI of Scotland succeeded Queen Elizabeth as James I of England, the St. Andrew's Cross of Scotland, white on a blue ground, was added, placed across the other, and at the Union of Ireland with

Britain in 1801 the St. Patrick's Cross—red on a white ground—was laid on the other. The Royal Standard, used only by the Royal Family, bears both the Union Jack and the British Coat of Arms.

The British Coat of Arms, as given above, was also fixed in its present form at the beginning of the last century when the two trios of lions on the shield, originally the Norman leopards, were combined with the lion rampant of Scotland and the Irish Harp of Tara, in opposite corners. The motto, on the riband of the Garter, which surrounds the shield—“*Honi Soit Qui Mal y Pense*” (evil to him who evil thinks), is that of the Order of the Garter, dating back to the institution of the Garter by Edward III. The motto “*Dieu et Mon Droit*,” “God and my Right,” at the base of the shield, was first adopted by Richard Cœur de Lion at the battle of Gisors in France, the year before his death. It was about that time that coats of arms were first adopted, as devices to enable a mail-clad warrior with his visor down to be known by his friends.

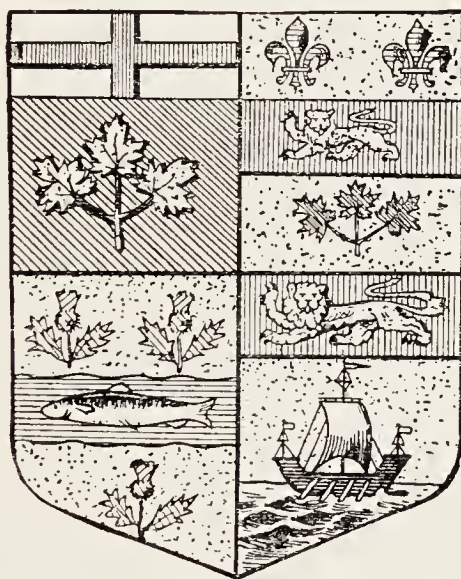
The symbolical supporters of the shield, the lion and unicorn, came one from England and one from Scotland. England always had a lion on her coat of arms, as a symbol of all that was strong, brave, generous and gentle, and Scotland, which at first had two lions, changed them to unicorns, the emblems of power and wisdom. At the Union the lion and unicorn were combined as supporters to the shield.



Supplement to the Canadian Edition

THE FLAGS AND COATS-OF-ARMS OF CANADA AND ITS PROVINCES.

WHILE our time-honoured Union Jack waves over Canada, as over every other part of the British Empire, and while the British coat-of-arms is our chief emblem of state the Dominion of Canada



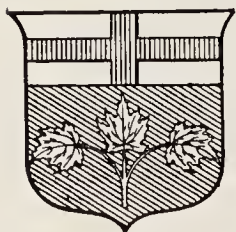
COAT-OF-ARMS OF THE DOMINION OF CANADA

has its own coat-of-arms, as well as its own maritime flag (for use at sea). Moreover, each of the nine Provinces which compose our Dominion has its own special

coat-of-arms, expressing something of its history and character.

It will be remembered that coats-of-arms came into use when knights fighting in battle used to wear, for protection from the enemy's swords and spears, helmets with cross-bars or plates of metal covering the face. And as a knight, with his face thus covered, could not be recognized by friend or foe, he used to wear on his shield and on the cloth tunic that covered his coat-of-mail, some device or token whereby his friends might know him. This embroidered tunic was called his "coat-of-arms."

We have seen that the British shield or coat-of-arms represents England, Scotland and Ireland—the centre of the British Empire. On our Canadian shield are represented the arms of the four Provinces which were the first, by their union in 1867, to found the Dominion of Canada. Their coats-of-arms stand together on our Dominion Shield, showing the same principle that is exemplified by the thirteen stripes on the flag of the Republic to the south of us, which there denote the thirteen colonies that originally formed the United States.



ONTARIO

On the Canadian arms, in what is considered the right-hand corner of the shield, looking from behind it, is placed the coat-of-arms of Ontario, showing, under the red cross of St. George, three maple-leaves, in autumn colouring, on a green ground. In addition to this coat-of-arms Ontario recently received from Britain the right to possess a "crest,"

with “supporters” and motto,—the “crest” being a bear in a walking position, above the coat-of-arms, supported on each side by a graceful deer, while underneath is a Latin motto meaning that the Province was faithful from the first and faithful she will continue to be, to her loyal duty. In the arms of Canada the crest, motto, and supporters are not used. The official coat-of-arms does not have any other devices, but is itself a quartered shield, in which only the original four provinces appear, without crown, wreath, supporters or motto.

Beside the red-cross and maple-leaves of Ontario on the shield, we see the arms of her sister Province, Quebec—two blue *fleurs-de-lis* on a golden ground, in memory of the emblematic lilies of France, whose explorers, as we have seen, first founded this Province. Underneath these is a British Lion in gold, and below it a spray of three green maple-leaves instead of the autumn leaves of Ontario.

Underneath the shield of Ontario is placed that of the Province of Nova Scotia, at the top of which stand two sturdy Scotch thistles, indicating its first Scottish settlers. Between this and another Scotch thistle below swims a silver fish, to show that Nova Scotia is largely a



QUEBEC



NOVA SCOTIA



NEW BRUNSWICK

country of seafaring men. Below the shield of Quebec is that of New Brunswick, like the three others an old colony—probably taking its name from George I; because Brunswick was the principal Duchy of Han-



PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND



BRITISH COLUMBIA

over, whence he came. It also has a British Lion in gold upon red, and underneath that an ancient ship or galley on the sea, because the craft of ship-building was from old times distinctive of New Brunswick.



MANITOBA

Though the other five Provinces are not represented on the Canadian shield, each has its appropriate coat-of-arms. That of New Brunswick's neighbour, Prince Edward Island, another old Province, named in honour of the father of Queen Victoria, has again the British Lion in gold on red, beneath which stands a sturdy oak, laden with acorns, under which three young oaks, repre-

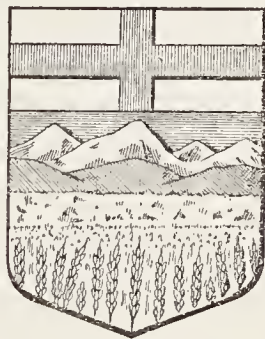
senting its three counties, stand under the protection of Canada—the small under the great, as is expressed by its Latin motto placed below.

British Columbia, fronting on the Pacific, another old colony, first settled by the Hudson's Bay Company, has a very striking device, that of the Union Jack with an antique crown set in its centre, under which the sun is rising in splendour over a silver sea. Below is its Latin motto, meaning "Brightness without setting"—perhaps in reference to the fact that the sun is always shining on some part of the British Empire.



SASKATCHEWAN

Manitoba, the Prairie Province, has for its emblem the standing figure of a shaggy buffalo, such as used to roam those great western plains, furnishing food to the wandering Indians, long before the country was peopled, as now, by British subjects of many races. Saskatchewan, a great grain-raising country, has for its device three sheaves of wheat standing beneath a British Lion, while Alberta, with its mountainous region, where the famous Rocky Mountains tower beside the grand Selkirk Range, has, beneath the red cross of England, a range of snow-capped mountains, against which rise the green foot-



ALBERTA

hills, and, beneath that, a stretch of prairie land and a field of golden grain.

None of these five provincial coats-of-arms appear on the Dominion shield, nor on the Canadian flag of the Merchant-marine, which is a red one, bearing the shield first described, while Canadian Government vessels carry a blue flag carrying the same coat-of-arms on the "fly." But the old Union Jack is always and for every one the right flag to fly on shore.

NOTE.—For the above details the author is indebted to George Sherwood Hodgins, in "The Heraldry of Canada," published by Henry Birks & Sons, Ottawa.

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Canada Forever

A. M. Macfar ("Fidelis")

E. Zöllner-Staebler

Tempo di marcia molto maestoso

VOICE

1. Our Can-a-da, strong, fair and free, Whose sceptre stretches far
 2. Our sires their old tra-di-tions brought, Their lives of faith-ful toil,
 3. Sax-on and Celt and Nor-man we, Each race its mem-ry keeps

PIANO

Whose hills look down on eith-er sea, And front the po-lar star Not
 For home and lib-er-ty they fought On-our Ca-na-dian soil Que
 Yet o'er us all from sea to sea One Red Cross Ban-ner sweeps Long

for thy greatness hard-ly known, Wide plains, or moun-tains grand, But
 bec-to us is sa-cred still, Nor less is Lun-dy's Lane- Long
 may our "Great-er Bri-tain" stand The bul-wark of the free, But

as we claim thee for our own, We love our na-tive land }
 may a loy-al peo-ple fill The land they fought to gain } We
 Can-a-da our own dear land, Our first love is for thee }

p

love our na-tive land Our own Ca-na-dian land. God

This system contains the first line of the song. The vocal melody is in G major (one flat) and 4/4 time. The piano accompaniment features a steady eighth-note pattern in the right hand and a more complex bass line in the left hand.

bless our na-tive land Our own Ca-na-dian land. God bless our

This system continues the melody. The piano accompaniment includes a 'cresc' (crescendo) marking in the right hand towards the end of the system.

own Ca-na-dian land Of moun-tain, lake and riv-er The

This system continues the melody. The piano accompaniment features a 'p' (piano) marking in the right hand towards the end of the system.

cho-rus rings from strand to strand Of Can-a-da for-ev-er

This system concludes the song. The piano accompaniment includes a 'fff' (fortissimo) marking in the right hand and a 'rit' (ritardando) marking in the left hand towards the end of the system.

Words from "Lays of the True North," by A. M. Machar

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